

THE .PSYCHOLOGY OF THE UNWANTED CHILD

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PREFACE

THIS book is written in the sincere and humble hope that it may help those who have the care of the homeless child, the unwanted child, the rejected and the uprooted child, to recognise the supreme interest and importance of their task, and their responsibility to future generations.

I have not attempted to minimise the difficulties of the child or of his guardians, but I have tried to look inside the child's mind and have endeavoured to understand a little of his fears, his frustrations, his loneliness, his desires, and his dreams. It is difficult indeed for those of us who have the security of a happy home life behind us to imagine clearly the emotions of the destitute, the orphaned, the neglected, or the unwanted child. Perhaps the European scene has made the picture more vivid; perhaps the Curtis Committee Report has shattered some of our illusions. But whatever the stimulus the response of all individuals who possess humanity and the qualities of good citizenship should be the same—a strenuous desire to right these wrongs and to ensure that every unwanted child feels appreciated, recognised by someone, and gains a sense of “belongingness” so that he no longer seeks compensation in ephemeral dreams

or delinquent adventures, but is able to look forward to growing up with confidence.

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I also wish to record my gratitude to Miss Sandeman, to Mr and Mrs Fletcher, and to Dr Braithwaite, all of whom permitted me to study the "institutional child" under extremely favourable conditions. I wish also to thank Miss Margaret Hamlen and Mr William Moore, who helped to collect data in regard to the child from a normal home environment, to Mr J. C. Raven for permission to include an outline of the Story Completion Test, and to Miss Broughton for assistance with proof corrections.

A. H. BOWLEY.

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FOREWORD

THIS study of the personal needs of the child whose own family has failed him is written by an experienced psychologist. Dr Agatha Bowley has for many years been able to enter into the lives of children of all ages who are unhappy or disturbed, to reassure them and to set them in the way of becoming more contented, capable, and friendly. In the course of this Child Guidance service, which she has undertaken as an educational psychologist in Dundee and in Leicester, she has come across numbers of children whose difficulties arise because their parents are unable to give them that sense of enduring love and respect which lies at the root of serenity and growth.

In this book the author offers some clues to the understanding of how this deprivation feels to the child, and shows how he struggles to find his lost confidence in his own value. She also throws light upon some of the means by which parents may be helped towards more genuine love and thoughtful care. It is sometimes, however, impossible to preserve the kind of shelter and support needed for the child to take root and flourish in his own home, and then he must be transplanted. Dr Bowley discusses how we may be guided in our search for the best means of fostering his development when this uprooting takes place.

The fact that there is a relation between a child's nervousness, unhappiness, or delinquency and the quality of his home life is well known, and has already interested

not only specialists, but many other thoughtful men and women. We are still, however, a long way from understanding how the loss of normal home life affects children with different temperaments, though we know that some individuals are much more readily harmed than others. We know, too, that different children by nature find solace in different ways. Some, for example, retreat into themselves, becoming shy and solitary ; others assert themselves in anger, destructiveness, or greed. The importance of understanding more about these differences does not need argument. Dr Bowley is able from her talks with the children, their parents, and those who look after them when they are away from home, to give us insight into these puzzling contrasts of attitude and behaviour. Her vivid illustrations, drawn from real life histories and from the children's own imaginative story-telling and drawings, open up for the reader some of the ways of reaching the inner world of the child's mind which in ordinary life he may find no way of expressing, and which may often be hidden from those who are looking after him.

In reading this book it must be remembered that those children who come the way of the Child Guidance Clinic or the home for maladjusted children have probably suffered more deeply than most children from their difficult home life. Many people regard adoption or placement in a foster home as providing a more natural upbringing for those who cannot stay with their own families. Dr Bowley thinks that there are special difficulties in the way of extending these forms of care for children who have suffered most acutely. She therefore turns her attention mainly to the care of such children in residential homes, hostels, and boarding schools. She describes some of the more successful of these experiments, showing that it is possible, even in children's communities, to give them individual

care and understanding and to provide for a varied life in which each child can enjoy his own possessions and discoveries and learn to live happily and successfully with other people.

The *Curtis Report* has reminded the public that the task of providing a good substitute for home life is not an easy one, and that we have by no means succeeded in compensating all deprived children for the loss of their own parents. Public indignation is easily aroused over individual tragedies, such as the death of Dennis O'Neill. It is more difficult to sustain a concern about homeless children which spreads the responsibility for their care through the neighbourhood in which they live, offering to the children and to those who look after them interest, understanding, and friendship.

In the past fifty years much greater progress has been made in their physical than in their psychological care, as the *Curtis Report* bears witness. In a Parliamentary debate which followed its publication, Mr Godfrey Nicholson said :

"I am not so much moved by the horrors. . . . I believe you have only to focus public attention on those Dickensian scenes to get them remedied. . . . But I am much more moved by the paragraphs that deal in more moderate tones with the lack of background and of private life, the fact that children in institutions have nowhere to put what my children call their "treasures"; the fact that there is lack of stability. All that is a far greater condemnation of our attitude of mind than are certain isolated horrors. . . . It is a melancholy, ugly picture."

Dr Bowley agrees with the Curtis Committee that the greatest need of the child is for sustained personal affection from some one individual. But though this is important, it is not enough. Those who take this responsibility must

needs have wisdom and special skill. Natural love of children and enjoyment of their company there must be; but the needs of a child suffering from emotional hunger are far more difficult to meet than the needs of those who have undergone physical hardship, and require imaginative understanding which transcends common sense. Teachers in training courses for house mothers and fathers and for social workers will welcome this study, which can be used to extend and illuminate their own knowledge and experience and that of their students.

A well-known American social worker, Julia Lathrop, wrote: "The greatest social forces are clear ideas in the minds of energetic men and women of goodwill." All the goodwill, all the energy, and all the clearness of thought that we can muster will be needed if we are to assure to each child the best guardianship of which the community is capable. This book contributes most usefully to such clear thinking.

S. CLEMENT BROWN.

MARCH 1947.

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CHAPTER I

THE ESSENTIALS OF GOOD PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

PERHAPS the first essential to ensure sturdy growth is firm and stable roots. The dandelion, as every gardener knows to his cost, has strong tap roots which usually defy all attempts to disturb them. Some children grow rather like dandelions—they have firm roots and they flourish in fine or stormy weather alike, and in most surroundings. Others, like sweet peas with shallow roots, are liable to be disturbed by strong winds and inclement weather. Again, sturdy growth usually depends on a good quality of soil, a rich loamy soil being preferable to an arid, stony soil. Children also will flourish best in an environment which is kindly, affectionate, and secure.

* Children need above all stability, safety, security, and affection. They need to know on whom they can rely and to be sure that their parents are dependable and trustworthy. There are many occasions, especially in early childhood, when a child feels unsure of himself. If he cannot feel sure of his parents, his sense of insecurity is likely to be very great indeed.

In this book I shall be discussing in some detail the troubles of the child who is uprooted or who has never known a happy and secure background, and it

will be evident that many of his troubles are caused by just this—his inner sense of insecurity.

Every child needs especially to have experience of real affection from other people ; he needs appreciation and recognition. Without this, he receives no assurance that he himself is good, worthy, lovable, and wanted. It is important for his emotional development that he should have this assurance to offset his inner fears of badness, unworthiness, unlovableness, and his sense of rejection.

Mothers, tired, irritable, or exasperated, may say in a careless moment : “ Oh, for goodness’ sake, run away and play ! I don’t want you here,” or “ I’ll not love you any more if you do that,” or “ Your dad will put you in the dustbin if you don’t look out ! ” Many children will disregard such remarks and they may do little harm, but the unusual child may take them too much to heart, and read too much meaning into such a careless remark. Thus much unintentional damage may be done.

We know that the boasting child brags because he is unsure of his powers ; that the naughty child misbehaves when he is unsure of his parent’s love and has to prove to himself that it remains despite his naughtiness. Boastfulness and naughtiness will pass away when the child has been able to prove his powers and to gain reassurance of love. If he cannot gain this proof and reassurance, he will continue to be anti-social.

The child’s parents set up standards in his mind of goodness, of truth, of loyalty and kindness. Without these standards the child has little on which to pattern himself or to emulate. As he grows older his

standards may become his ideals. At adolescence, the testing time, he scrutinises his ideals and standards and rebuilds them to fit his conception of the world around him.

From deeper studies of the minds of little children we have discovered that they tend to build up pictures in their minds of their parents which are rather fantastic, crude, and unrealistic. These pictures tend to be conflicting and depict the parent as all-loving, omnipotent, kind, and brave, or the reverse—cruel, hateful, ugly, and terrifying. Such figures are reflected in the fairy-tale lore of childhood, and correspond to the fairy queen and wicked witch, to Father Christmas or the ugly ogre of the fairy story. The saga of Jack the Giant Killer and Cinderella and her Fairy Godmother can be interpreted as the boy who overthrows his wicked father, and the unwanted child who is succoured by a “good” mother. Now, if in real life the child meets with situations which intensify these feelings which are buried in his mind and largely unconscious, if his parents are really cruel and unkind, his fantasies may appear terrifyingly true. His world is peopled with giants and witches against whom he is largely powerless. If he cannot be sure of his parents’ affection he can be sure of nothing or no one, and likewise he is not able to show affection readily. His attitude is likely to be one of suspicion, or fear, or sullen hate. An unloved child is likely to suffer emotionally in the same way as an under-nourished child is likely to suffer physically; in the first case emotional development, and in the second physical development, are liable to be seriously handicapped.

The early feelings of parents and children are thus

of very great importance. Impatience and resentment, anger or hate, will occur, of course, but they will not destroy a good relationship if it is founded on good experience of mutual love and respect.

A child seeks love, comfort, succour, peace, and happiness from his parents. He also experiences control and discipline which help him to come to terms with his aggressive impulses and give him an experience of order and security. He may sometimes rebel against necessary restraints, but this rebellion is natural and healthy. If he receives no guidance, he gains no sense of order in life or the stabilising reassurance that his impulses can be controlled. This is where an external authority can help.

The family nucleus is the best environment for the growing child. In the family he has a special place to fill, a special rôle to play. He experiences a sense of "belongingness." When he is away he is missed; when he triumphs, the family rejoices with him; when he suffers, the family commiserates with him. His family is an extension of himself. There is a kind of clannishness—a sense of "togetherness" which binds the members of the family together to face the hostile world outside when necessary.

There are family games, family secrets, family fetishes, family jokes, and family tragedies. At the same time there is often family friction, healthy hostility, and conflicts which are inevitable from the psychological point of view. The clash of wills and purposes, of *meum* and *tuum*, of desires and ambitions, prepare a child for the battle of life. In so far as he learns to deal well and wisely with the everyday problems in the friendly atmosphere of home, and

learns to give and take, to compromise, to withstand domination, to develop his character, he will be able to deal more wisely with problems outside the family circle.

Home, whether a prefabricated flat or country mansion, means something real and lasting to the child. When he is away from home he feels homesick and tends to idealise his home. If he changes homes frequently he loses a certain amount of stability. Children like familiar surroundings—their possessions, where they know to find them, the swing in the old apple tree, the drain-pipe which can be shinned up, the cupboard under the stairs, a favourite haunt in hide-and-seek, the coal-hole or the attic—these are the things of home which a child will never forget.

If he has lived all his life in other people's houses, perhaps changing from one relative to another, he has little time or opportunity to collect treasured memories and he does not feel the same sense of "belongingness."

Of course, the *mother* is the most important person in the young child's life. In adult life we constantly refer to our mother tongue, to mother earth, to the motherland, and similar phrases. Some of us expect "mothers" all our lives; some men marry to gain a new mother, rather than a wife. We learn to accept our nurses or our teachers or older friends in place of our mothers, and gradually learn to become independent and cut our mother's apron strings, just as the navel cord was cut at birth.

The taking of nourishment from the mother is the first important experience in the child's life. This may go well or ill. There are evidently strong feelings connected with it in the child's mind, and a strong

fear of loss in his mind. Sucking is a universal activity of the human infant: his mother's breast provides the natural answer to his first vital need; but he also sucks his bottle as a substitute, or his thumb, his toes, his toys with avidity. Older children may still suck their thumbs, then their pencils. Adults suck sweets, or chew gum or smoke cigarettes. Sucking is a comforting, soothing activity, and we tend to indulge in it when we are tired or bored or overstrained. Children tend to suck their thumbs more often and far longer if they have received neither sufficient nourishment nor affection in babyhood.

The unwanted child is usually bottle-fed and hastily weaned. Often he is a thumb-sucker; often he is faddy about his food. The wanted, well-nourished, well-loved child is less likely to be either.

Here are two examples which show the difference in the personality development of the wanted and the unwanted child.

CAROLINE was adopted at $3\frac{1}{2}$ years. She had been rather neglected and ill-cared for, and had spent part of her life in a "home." But she was then adopted by good, loving foster-parents who were eager to do their best for her. There were certainly times when she proved difficult and defiant, but on the whole the relationship was a good one. Expert medical treatment was arranged, as she could not tolerate a fatty diet. She did well at school, gaining a scholarship and qualifying for Secondary Grammar School education. She was growing up fast and had been allowed a permanent wave. She was given spending money and the foster-parents showed a keen interest in her.

LUCY had a poor type of mother who lived an immoral life and was divorced by the father. Lucy was passed around between the relations, none of whom really cared for her, and her behaviour grew worse and worse. Finally, the father remarried and, at the age of 7 years, Lucy came to live with

her stepmother, a righteous, Calvinistic woman, very hard and very strict, who regarded Lucy as an unwelcome part of the marriage bargain. She determined to reform her. Lucy's retaliation took the form of pilfering. She had an abnormal appetite and an insatiable craving for food and sweet things. She stole the baby's orange juice. She stole money to buy ice-cream, cakes, sweets, and lemonade. She helped herself to jam and sugar, and even to cod-liver oil! Her stepmother replied by more and more stringent restrictions: cutting down pocket-money, refusing to let her go swimming, or to the cinema, and sending her out of the house as soon as she had had her meals, instead of letting her stay and play with the baby stepsister, of whom she was very fond. She also locked all the store-cupboards and tied her bedroom door at night. It was little wonder that Lucy did not improve. She was a deeply hurt child, feeling unloved and unwanted.

Fathers also have an important rôle to play in family life. The word "father" implies certain characteristics such as power, prestige, wisdom, and kindliness. We weave mythical tales about Father Christmas, Father Time, Father Neptune. We talk of the "fatherland" as well as the "motherland." Children will usually show respect, admiration, and love, tinged with awe, towards their father, and will turn to him for guidance and help.

It is, I think, important that fathers should show interest in, and help with, the children when they are quite young. They can play and talk together and get to know and love each other very early. The father can mean a great deal to the young child. I have known children of 3, 4, or 5 years who fretted persistently when the father had to go away in the Forces. Some lose sleep and appetite, some become difficult or listless or even run high temperatures. This is usually due to anxiety—anxiety lest their father may not return, lest any action of theirs may have been instru-

mental in sending him away, lest they are no longer loved or wanted by the father, and may never again have a "complete" family circle.

The fatherless child misses all the positive contributions the father may make to the home—love, support, control, encouragement. But he also misses something on the negative side. Such a child feels different from other children, as if he were somehow bad and unworthy of a father. Perhaps he may feel that his badness has denied him a father or sent his father away. He may even feel that his mother is not worthy of a husband and therefore not lovable.

The illegitimate child is at a great disadvantage. Usually his origin is not fully explained to him but clouded in mystery. He tends to fantasy about a powerful, wonderful, wealthy father for whom he is constantly seeking.

A child without a father lacks not only external control but also inner control, so important to psychic development. He does not have the same opportunity to model himself on a "father figure," the same incentive to build up a good controlling influence—the "super-ego"—in his own mind. He has to rely on his mother for both affection and discipline, and his relationship with her is often intense and difficult.

The following are two examples which demonstrate the diverse effect of the father's influence on the child's behaviour.

TEDDY was an intelligent 6-year-old. He had, however, become the ringleader of mischief in his own district, and seldom went regularly to school. He preferred to wander down-town, beg rides or pennies from the American soldiers,

and feast on buns and ice-cream. He had been behaving well until his father went abroad. Then his mother took up with an American and Teddy was left much to his own devices. Finally, the mother committed suicide, and Teddy was the first to discover her body in the gas-oven. It was little wonder that the delinquent adventures, which had commenced when the family unity had been disturbed, should become more numerous and more serious. Fortunately, the father was keenly devoted to his son, and his return helped to bring things back to normal. Teddy lived with an understanding aunt and uncle until his father was demobilised. Then the delinquency ceased and now there is good prospect of Teddy's weathering the storm and growing up into a happy, orderly citizen.

BOBBY also lost his mother. She was reported to have been a "bad lot," but she died when he was quite young. He was then looked after rather indifferently by his granny and then by various aunts. Finally, his father married again, and the new wife took over Bobby as part of the marriage bargain. There was little love lost between them, and usually there was open warfare. Bobby pilfered, told lies, and was thoroughly unreliable. The father's return only resulted in more friction, for an acute jealousy situation arose and Bobby quickly learned to play off one against the other. The father, who was not a strong character, was torn between his wife and child. Finally he gave up the struggle and told me with tears in his eyes that Bobby must be "put away" and that he wished to charge him as "beyond control" in the Juvenile Court.

Fathers, mothers, and children imply a subtle relationship of dependence, independence, and interdependence—love and hate, delight and anxiety. The rich emotional experience gained in family life is of the very stuff of life—the warp on which the web is woven. Without it there will always be something lacking in the child's emotional life.

Psycho-analytic studies have revealed the duality of emotional life, the loving and hating of the same person, the parent. The child can learn gradually to

deal with this, to redirect his antagonism and to reinforce his affection: to appreciate his mother and yet to share her with others without too keen a sense of loss. A deprived child who has never been sure of his mother's affection finds it very difficult to share anything, whether people or possessions. He is frequently jealous and demands much attention and clear evidence of care and affection.

A normal child, brought up in a normal family, can learn to share his parents and his toys as he grows older. He can tolerate his mother's absence and he can accept new friends into the family circle, because he feels fundamentally secure in family relationships. With this background and these roots, children can flourish and prosper. Given a full measure of affection, security, and mild control their future is indeed promising; without these, difficulties are likely to occur.

Family life has also a free and easy atmosphere, a homely nature which is seldom found in any institution or "home." Toys all over the floor, the baby making puddles on the carpet, the puppy chewing the hearth-rug, father shouting for his tea, and mother trying to finish the cooking—while Mary tries to concentrate on her homework. This is the kind of thing that is liable to happen in the best regulated families at times, and is endearingly human. Emergencies are liable to occur, crises come and go, but family life goes on just the same. There are birthday parties, treats, picnics, and holidays. There are epidemics, operations, and accidents. But mother and father will see the children safely through, and this sharing of joy and sorrow, this close community living, welds the members of the family in a way which is seldom possible

in an institution where routine and regularity are experienced more often than the warmth of personal relationships. Crèches, day nurseries, and residential nurseries may be hygienic and may inculcate good habits, but the loss of personal affection and close family relationships implied is a dangerous matter. I will say more about this in Chapter IV.

The emotional disturbance to the child caused by mother's absence through illness, long working hours, or by a long confinement, for instance, when the child is small, is often very great and very often unrecognised. Sometimes we find a coincidence of circumstances, *e.g.*, the child's treatment in hospital, coinciding with the arrival of a baby, and father's departure to the Forces, which will accentuate a latent feeling of deprivation and rejection, and result in behaviour problems and nervous symptoms. Often such things are unavoidable, but the manner of dealing with them is all-important.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN

For the benefit of individuals who have the care of children, whether as their natural or their substitute parents, it may be helpful to summarise the most important emotional, social, and intellectual needs of children of different ages and at different stages of development.

1. *The Needs of the Pre-school Child*

The child between the ages of 2 and 5 years needs a good deal of *mothering*. He needs to be comforted when he is hurt or unhappy, praised when he is successful in his achievements, caressed when he asks for

petting, and nursed when he is ill or ailing. As one working-class mother put it: "I always give her a bit of love at bedtime 'cos I think she feels a little left out since we had the new baby." Many children need the little bit of love at other times than only at bedtimes!

The very young child, still at the toddler stage, needs a great deal of *personal attention* not only to his physical needs, though these are very important, but also to his intellectual and emotional needs. He needs to feel that his mother or "mother substitute" is interested in his growing powers, his first efforts at doing up his own buttons, at using a crayon, at carrying a cup, at putting words together. He needs praise and appreciation for countless little deeds and actions which are remarkable to the child's mind. He needs to feel the loved person has time to listen to his halting speech, or to tell him a story, or show him how to balance his bricks or pedal his kiddie car.

At the same time he needs *help in learning independence*, and his first efforts at self-help should be encouraged rather than belittled. Of course, it is much quicker for the adult to dress him, but far more educative for the child to try to dress himself. Most two-year-olds can feed themselves, do up many of their own buttons, put away some of their toys, and go upstairs without being picked up. Four-year-olds can use a knife and fork with a little help, can assist in little ways in the house, can run and jump and skip and climb if they have been encouraged to do so, and can usually pick themselves up after a tumble and bring the damaged knee for inspection.

The pre-school child needs also *good opportunities*

for play, for childish play, messy play, and noisy play. If he has sand and water, chalk and crayons, bricks and wheel toys, and a few dolls or cuddly toys he can be relied upon to occupy himself for a considerable time. He will weary of his own company, however, and certainly from 3 years onwards he will begin to enjoy the *company of other children* near his age. Before 3 years he will appreciate a friendly rough-and-tumble with a grown-up. Usually he does not play long with the same toy nor the same child when he is very young, but by the time he is 4 or 5 years his span of attention is longer, his concentration more persistent, and his attachment to some children closer. His play is often very imaginative, and grown-ups should not intrude unless invited. Organised play is out of place at this age and opportunities for experimenting, for exploring, for destructive as well as constructive play should be allowed him.

Naturally he is curious and inquisitive, and his *questions* about the how and when and where and why of things and people around him should be *answered truthfully*. He will want to know the names of things, how things are made, especially babies, why things happen in a certain way, how things work, how the water gets into the bath and out again, and so on. Usually he has an excellent memory at this age and is very observant, and it is a great mistake to fog the issue or evade the question. When he asks where his daddy is when he has been killed in the war he should be told the truth, or when he questions the existence of Father Christmas the matter should be explained to him. A child will always respect an adult who is honest with him.

2. *The Needs of the School Child (5 to 12 Years)*

The older child, even though he has learnt to stand on his own feet, still needs steady affection and his *share of mothering*, although more tactfully and unobtrusively given. The schoolboy does not wish to appear a cissy, and the small girl in pigtails is quick to deprecate what she calls "fussing." But any withdrawal of attention or interest, any failure to respond to affectionate advances, is quickly noted and causes much hurt. When things go wrong, when sums are difficult, when the other kids tease or bullyrag, or, perhaps, when a rainy day spoils a birthday picnic, the child expects sympathy and commiseration.

The *desire for independence* grows with the years. School children like to be left to their own devices to some extent, to plan their own exploits and games, to keep their own secrets and seek their own adventures. Grown-ups are often despised and their intervention resented. Generally the younger group prefer unorganised play, rough-and-tumble fights and tussles, acting and dressing up, family and school games, and active running and ball games. As they grow older they appreciate team games, organised group play, and the leadership of an older child or of a grown-up. After 11 years juvenile organisations such as Scouts or Guides increase in popularity. Again some children prefer quiet games and occupations such as painting or sewing or reading and do not always seek a merry gang. This need for solitary play and quiet occupation should be respected. Children vary a great deal in their interests and their intelligence, and often the foundation of a lifelong interest or of a most enjoyable

hobby may be laid during the middle years of childhood, especially among the most intelligent children.

The *love of adventure* is keen during these years and should not be denied the child. He will search out his own adventures, build his own den, make his own hidey-hole, and go on his own explorations if permitted to do so. The institutional child, if too restricted in his environment, will be at a great disadvantage compared with the child at home who can ramble in the woods, play around the old quarry, or paddle in the brook. The seven-year-old and the eight-year-old are usually satisfied with a simple country environment or the everyday life of the streets, the parks, the market, and the shops. Their horizon is not very wide. The older child may go farther afield by bicycle or bus, and may enjoy the cinema or the adventure story more keenly. And the fun of festivities—of Guy Fawkes' Day, of Christmas, of birthdays and anniversaries—should be exploited to the full. Gradually the child's environment should be enlarged, his horizon widened, and excursions and treats planned; picnics, visits to the circus or the pantomime or the gymkhana, holidays at the seaside can all be fully appreciated by the child over 8 years.

During these years the *community spirit* usually develops. The child between these ages learns to enjoy the company of his fellows, to accept leadership or submit to it more willingly, and builds up a certain loyalty to the group, whether to his family, his gang, or to his classmates. This gives him a sense of belonging, and of solidarity, and of confidence. He appreciates the advantages of community life and learns to accept the disadvantages. He accepts certain rules and

traditions and recognises a certain rough justice. He learns to compromise, to sympathise, to criticise, and he gradually builds up a code of behaviour and certain standards which help him to guide his own life. The example of the grown-up will help, so also that of his fellows.

3. *The Needs of the Adolescent*

The older child needs *outlet* for his growing powers, his widening intellect, his developing interests and skills. He needs *hobbies* and *books* and a *club* or a group of young people with whom he can discuss his ideas and practise his skills. He needs *contact with grown-ups* who have interesting things to tell or to show him. Giving the farmer a helping hand, watching the carpenter at work, going out with a fisherman—these are the kind of experiences which are valuable to the adolescent. Often he can learn more this way than by any amount of book learning.

He will appreciate a *large measure of responsibility and trust*, and often will like to help with a younger child either at home or at school. Sometimes he will carry out simple jobs for adults very willingly, getting coal, making the tea, washing-up, cleaning the shoes, or feeding the hens. Sometimes he is unwilling and will shirk his duties, and then the whole matter must be approached tactfully.

He needs a *large measure of freedom*; freedom in choice of companions, choice of books, choice of clothes, choice of hobbies, and in the spending of his pocket-money. He also needs *wise discipline and guidance*,

and will usually accept this from an adult who has won his respect and esteem.

He needs *privacy* and much wholesome non-interference from grown-ups. He needs a place of his own, a room, a shed in the backyard, or a corner of an attic. His reticence should be respected ; his letters should be his own business ; his life should be his own, subject to benevolent supervision by grown-ups. Love affairs may come and go and need not be taken too seriously unless there is reason to suspect that they are too absorbing or too intense. *Attachments to older people* should be expected ; often these can be very helpful to the adolescent struggling to master new and disturbing physical experiences and emotional moods. Some understanding of these physical changes and a fairly full sex education should be vouchsafed to the growing boy and girl as they seek for enlightenment.

The adolescent boy or girl needs to be treated very much as an equal by the adult, but at the same time it must be remembered that he has many of the feelings of the child and his skills and abilities are only partly developed. He needs tactful encouragement, much information, and wise guardianship.

CHAPTER II

THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF EMOTIONAL REJECTION

PARENTAL love is the birthright of every child, but there are many children met with in institutions, in Juvenile Courts, in Child Guidance Clinics, who have never known true affection.

Many children are unwanted—the Jane Eyres of society. In this chapter I want to analyse some of the reasons why, and some of the effects of unwantedness. In further chapters we will explore possible remedies. I shall try to be as objective as possible and set down facts and figures from my own daily experience of difficult and unhappy children, some of whom are living in their own homes and some of whom have been removed. It is on this experience that I shall base my opinions.

Some children are not planned for and are unwelcome. They may be the result of a chance encounter, an impulse, or an accident. Their arrival is often heralded with despair and disgust. Sometimes normal maternal feelings save this situation; sometimes the child has a bad start and a worse finish. Often children who are the legacy of a former marriage are unwelcome members of the new family. Sometimes they are relics of a broken-up marriage and are unwanted by parents or relatives. Many of the cases I meet with in my daily work are the result of marital

mistakes, marital mishaps, marital disharmony, and the percentage of broken homes from which delinquent and difficult children come from is known to be high. Fifty per cent. is a low estimate in my opinion.

There are severe and mild cases of rejection. Some parents grumble because the new baby is a disfigurement to the mother's appearance, or a restraint on activity, or an economic embarrassment. Usually, however, at bottom, the child is an accepted and appreciated member of the family. Busy mothers may feel that children cramp their style, or affect their careers or their relationship with their husbands. Sometimes the children suffer, sometimes the husbands, sometimes the careers. Parents should face the *responsibilities* of parenthood and only have children if they really want them and are prepared to make some sacrifices.

Some mothers try to cover up their feelings by an elaborate show of affection or showers of presents or quantities of goodies, but in such cases it is usually evident that the child is aware of his fundamental rejection. It is not his mother's apple tart that he craves for but his mother's love. He may, however, steal the former in place of the latter. It is noteworthy that most deprived children have a craving for food, for sweets, cakes, and goodies, which are really symbolical of mother-love.

Some mothers show great and constant anxiety lest their child falls ill or has an accident, and appear over-maternal. To the discerning eye this is symptomatic of feelings of antagonism and hate, often unconscious and inarticulate.

Sometimes the mother frankly feels that she is less

attractive to her husband and has less time and energy for him. She feels that she has lost his love and she naturally, though often unconsciously, blames the baby. Often the husband looks elsewhere for sexual satisfaction, and a family split may be imminent. Often, fortunately, the father feels a link with his own offspring and begins to regard his marriage in a new light, and develops into more of a family man—a father, rather than a lover and a husband—but, of course, it is necessary to try to fulfil the two rôles of husband and father.

Mothers seem to reject their children in some cases when they fear to lose their husbands' affections by too strong an allegiance to their children. Obviously such a marriage is likely to be insecure from its inception and the outlook for the child's future is far from a happy one.

Another cause of rejection is when the child is unsatisfactory in some way. He may have some disfiguring birthmark, some physical defect, or some degree of mental defect. There is naturally a tendency to reject such a child and to experience a sense of shame at having given birth to him. Physical abnormality is easier to accept than mental abnormality. Mothers tend either to refuse to face the latter fact or to reject the child. Often they rather pathetically deceive themselves that the child will grow out of it in time.

There are cases also when the child proves a great trial, perhaps on account of constant illness or else on account of difficult behaviour. Behaviour difficulties are often the result of early mismanagement; the mother feels that she has failed, but tries to blame

the child rather than herself. I think in such cases love has begun to turn to hate, and the mother exaggerates small misdemeanours into large ones in her mind. If this is her attitude to the child, it is difficult to bring about improvement rapidly.

What is the psychological effect of rejection? The experience of the troubles of rejected and neglected children who feel unwanted by their parents has led me to certain conclusions.

Rejected children may make a psychological protest in the form of difficult behaviour, or they respond by depression and anxiety. In the first case, probably the most healthy from the mental health point of view, the child behaves in a rebellious and defiant way, often pilfering, too, on a large scale. This is, I think, often the direct result of rejection. The child feels hated and responds by hating, turning his antagonism on to society. He feels, too, deeply deprived and steals what is symbolic of love, usually from his parents or foster-parents, in the form of money or food or something very precious to them. In his unruly behaviour the child often appears to be seeking to get rid of his guilt feeling (due to a sense of unworthiness from being unwanted) by making others responsible for controlling his destructive impulses. He is seeking someone powerful enough to control him and condemn him for wrong-doing—he is deliberately seeking punishment.

He may also be testing out the adults around him to see if their punishment will be so drastic and terrifying as he fears in his unconscious mind, and if they will continue to love him despite his ill-doing.

One way to help a rejected child who has become delinquent is to shower him with love. To caress a

child in a temper tantrum may stop the tantrum ; to give a child pocket-money may stop the stealing ; to trust him with responsibilities may cure irresponsible and unruly behaviour.

Another frequent reaction is incontinence. Children from broken homes and in institutions frequently wet or soil themselves by day or night. I have also found this to be fairly common among small boys living with stepmothers, and I think, in a good number of cases, it is symptomatic of aggressive feeling towards the stepmother, who is only a "bad" mother in the child's eyes, who still mourns his lost and well-loved mother. Incontinence is a potent weapon, but it only heaps burning coals on an already fiery furnace of hate and anger. Until the child feels loved, approved, and accepted, the incontinence is likely to continue.

The other most usual response to rejection is anxiety and depression, accompanied by feelings of unworthiness and self-reproach. The child feels very insecure, for he has lost his roots—the support on which he relied. In these cases certain anxiety symptoms are common, *e.g.*, disturbance of digestive processes, constipation, diarrhoea, incontinence due to anxiety, and sometimes stammering and asthmatic complaints, or general moodiness or fearfulness. These will only be cured when the child regains hope and feels safe and secure again. He needs desperately to build up some firm, loving relationship with some *one important person*.

It may be helpful to try to analyse more fully the causes that lie behind this type of behaviour in order to discuss the efficacy of different types of remedies.

What happens inside the child's mind when he is rejected by his parents ?

I think much depends on the age and stage of development which the child has reached. The worst time of all, of course, is at the beginning. If the baby experiences severe frustration at the breast, if he has insufficient milk and frequently feels hungry and unsatisfied, a deep craving is set up which is dangerous for his future development. A study of the case histories of criminals indicates that a high percentage suffered emotional deprivation in some form in babyhood. Deprivation at the infantile level is serious. The baby appears to identify his mother with everything that is "bad"—with the painful internal sensations of wind and hunger pains and digestive disturbances. These tend to be linked up with his picture of a "bad" mother in his mind. He thus feels that he has a dangerous "bad" object inside him which has power to damage him and to cause "badness" within. Bodily products become associated with "badness." Hence the tendency to void them in moments of aggression and to withhold them (constipation) in moments of anxiety.

In addition to these severe feelings of aggression, guilt, and anxiety, the young child is liable to develop a deep sense of deprivation, and all his life he may crave for the affection and attention which he has never received.

Moreover, the baby who is neglected and unwanted can never build up satisfactory parent images. He will lack "good" models on which to mould his character. If he does not experience much kindness and goodness he knows it not, and greets the world

with sullenness and bitterness. He is rather suspicious of friendly advances and is often a lonely and solitary figure. And so he becomes more unloved.

The young child who is often left alone, or receives little comfort or help when he most needs it, is liable to grow up into a timid, fearful child who clings to adults. The experience in early childhood of being alone or lost or seemingly forgotten must, indeed, be a terrifying one, especially for a child under a year old who cannot yet walk and is very helpless. Treatment in hospital, when it entails separation from his mother for a long time, isolation or impersonal care may be very disturbing to a little child, especially in the first few months of life.

The unwanted child is a pathetic figure. He seeks to claim adult attention, and usually in a way which only increases his rejection, by tiresome or difficult behaviour. It seems probable that he identifies himself with the "bad" figure of his imagination and seeks to destroy or burn or soil or damage in the infantile way of the unconscious. He cannot help himself. He feels "bad." He acts "bad." He is seeking to prove all the time that despite his "badness" the adult will love him just the same.

Most unwanted children have a deep sense of unworthiness, of inferiority and of inadequacy, and seek to compensate by bravado, by unruly behaviour, or by dastardly deeds to cover up their inner uncertainties. In really desperate cases when a child feels an outcast, suicidal attempts may even be made—aggression turned on to the self.

I know of one attractive young adolescent who was over-attached to her father, and of rather an unstable temperament

and very emotional. * She became involved in quite serious pilfering exploits. Family standards were low and Jean received little real love or care from her mother. Her delinquency finally led her to a Remand Home. Here she panicked badly and made repeated attempts to abscond, sometimes successfully. She had evidently a horror of being sent to an Approved School—a place to her mind where you were “put away” and “locked up.” Finally, she made an hysterical leap from a third-storey window and was only saved from death by catching on the telephone wires.

She got away and indulged in an orgy of stealing for several days, until the police picked her up. She was taken to the Observation Ward of the Mental Hospital, where, with care and kindness, her highly emotional state was reduced, and she learnt to accept the transfer to the Approved School as a way of obtaining guidance and training. She had felt rejected by her parents who had taken an active part in charging her and sending her to the Remand Home, and her highly emotional nature had resulted in an abnormal reaction.

It is difficult to estimate the disturbance to the child's psychic life when he is placed in one different home after another. He can never build up a stable relationship to anyone, and often when he has just got used to one foster-mother he is pushed off to another. The acceptance of a stepmother or a stepfather is especially difficult. The child tends to imbue the step-parent with all the “bad” attributes of the parent figures. It is easy to see how the myth of the wicked stepmother of the fairy-tale has grown up. The dead mother is imbued with all the virtues in retrospect, and the normal aggression is turned on to the new mother. Retaliation by soiling, which is commonly found among such children, is evidence of a feeling of “badness” within the child and of hate towards the usurping mother.

Illegitimate children, as I have already mentioned, tend to build up a fantasy picture of the lost father

and often indulge in wandering, seeking in vain to find him.

It must also be very disturbing to the child when serious marital difficulties occur. In the cases I have been investigating I have found a number where the parents have proved unfaithful to one another and after a long period of strain and quarrelling have finally obtained a separation or divorce, or one has deserted. Now the child, as we know, builds up parent figures imbued with all the fine attributes. His ideals are thus rudely shattered; his idols are found to have feet of clay, and he is left floundering in uncertainty and anxiety. Rehabilitation is often difficult, especially if the child is very young. It is more successful if the child is older and fairly intelligent, and prepared to accept certain human weaknesses with tolerance.

CLAIRE was an intelligent girl in a Grammar School who was suspended from school because she was accused of writing obscene language on the lavatory wall.

When Claire was 7 years old it was discovered that her father had been previously married and his former wife was still alive. He was also proved to be a "bad lot" and to have served one prison sentence. The marriage had been broken up. The mother lived a difficult and unhappy life with Claire and never told the child the whole truth. Later, the mother began to associate with another man who came to live in the house as "uncle." Again, no full explanation was given to Claire. She was obviously greatly confused, her loyalties strained, and she could not accept her mother's new friend happily. I found she was pitifully ignorant of "the facts of life," and without the mother's permission I boldly told her the truth about her family and gave her elementary sex instruction. The mother, who at first had been most antagonistic, was most grateful. Claire returned to school and put a brave front on things. She was a serious, mature, intelligent girl, and afterwards seemed capable of dealing fairly well with the unusual difficulties of her life.

Disturbed, unhappy, and unwanted children are often the result of such family relationships and spring like mushrooms from a "broken home." I will describe two other cases with which I have recently been asked to deal, both the result of disturbed family relationships, and show only too clearly how serious the effects may be.

A head teacher summoned me by telephone one day to her school. "Michael is here to-day. He is sure to be gone to-morrow. Can you come out here immediately and see him? He is an impossible child and something must be done about him." I went to see the boy, aged 7 years, gave the usual intelligence tests, and had a long and lurid conversation with him in the course of which he regaled me with stories of blood and murder and sudden death, of dire accidents and of his father's sudden death, and of his mother, whom he said he hated—all highly coloured and largely imaginary.

His true story was as follows:—

His father had died when he was very young, and on his deathbed had committed Michael to the care of the boy's grandmother. She was now nearly senile and often mentally confused. She lavished love on the boy but seldom bothered about discipline. He rarely went to school, and she encouraged him to pilfer firewood and food. She seldom paid any bills, and the landlord, in desperation, broke all the windows to drive them out of the house. They had already taken up all the floorboards they could for firewood. The boy's mother was little better than a prostitute and showed little love or responsibility for Michael. He was rapidly becoming a little gangster.

Something had to be done immediately. A hard-working aunt had him for a few nights and we collected some second-hand clothing. He had lost his clothing coupons twice, and a further issue was refused him. The aunt patched and darned. We obtained the necessary authority to send him to a boarding-school under Section 50 of the Education Act, 1944. The welfare officer took him to a pleasant type of progressive school in the country. His worldly possessions consisted of a small brown paper parcel of clothes, a bag of sweets, a little pocket-money, and a small toy motor-car which I gave him.

On arrival at the school he took one look and decided that he did not like it much and was later found to be missing. He was picked up by a member of the staff shortly afterwards, marching along the road clutching a threepenny bit in one sticky hand and the toy motor in the other. It was not difficult to persuade him to return to school because as he said, "I've nowhere to go, and very little money," but he vowed to go on a hunger-strike. He was promised sixpence a day if he kept this up, but he gave up easily at the sight of biscuits and milk at bedtime.

I saw him a few weeks later and found him already somewhat changed. He took me round and proudly showed the trees he climbed, the brook he paddled in, the wood where he made a den, but he was not yet a popular member of the community and held himself rather aloof. He never left my side, and talked incessantly. I took him for a run in the car and fed him on chocolate and "pop." He clung to the toy pistol I had brought him and apparently waited daily for the postman to bring him something. Fortunately, his aunt did not forget him, though his mother never bothered, and he received an occasional postcard or parcel. The beginnings of this child's life had been normal, but he had been through a very difficult time. One could only hope that growing-up would not be too difficult for him.

CLARICE, at the age of 9 years, may be truthfully described as a "dead-end kid."

She roamed the streets at night with a troop of Chinese children. She pilfered and told lies. She often soiled herself, and she was rude and defiant to her mother.

One could understand and forgive all these misdeeds when one knew her background. The parents were artistic, Bohemian, unstable, neurotic people who had had many love affairs before they had finally married. Clarice was definitely a mistake and unwanted. Two miscarriages had been induced before, and the mother thought she had successfully prevented Clarice's arrival. The father was a medical auxiliary in the Army, and went through many harrowing experiences in concentration camps. He also fell in love with a German girl of whom he still cherished memories when he returned to England, and she had a baby by him. The marriage was in danger of shipwreck. The mother was frequently in hysterical tears and the father would clear off and get drunk. It is little wonder that Clarice went off on her own wanderings. We

managed to salvage the marriage; the father obtained a steady job; the mother's health and outlook improved, and Clarice showed some signs of reform. She was very intelligent, wise beyond her years, unusually mature in some ways and remarkably childish in others. She knew all about her parents' love-affairs, and she herself had been sexually interfered with at the age of 6 years. She was very small for her age and was attending an open-air school for delicate children.

Efforts were made to counteract her over-stimulating life. She joined the Brownies and suddenly decided she would attend Sunday School. She joined in the dramatic and athletic activities of her school and attended ballet-dancing classes. But her relationship with her mother was fundamentally wrong, and defiance and naughtiness continued at home. We eventually arranged a short-term placement in a progressive school in order to ease the situation at home.

It is thus that unwanted children become difficult children.

I have collected certain facts about fifty unwanted children, taken at random from my records. The facts and figures speak for themselves. In each case the child has experienced either emotional rejection or material neglect in some degree. He may have been literally abandoned—"left on the steps of the work-house!"—or he may have been left to "drag himself up," running the streets with a mob of other children; or a child may experience a mild sense of rejection by the thought that one or other parent favours another child or even just because mother or father is too busy to bother with him. He may, on the other hand, experience serious rejection from an adoptive parent or step-parent or an unwilling guardian.

The group of children whose records I have been studying appear to be on the whole of average intelligence, and include some children of very high intelligence. It is clear, then, that it is not on the

grounds of poor mental ability that these children lost favour in their parents' or guardians' eyes.

They show a wide age-range, but a large number are quite young children. There seems to be two age groups when difficulties occur most frequently—between 6 and 8 years and at 11 years. This represents first the age when the child usually begins to show signs of rebellion and protest against his environment, and second, the first stages of adolescence when the child, disturbed by physical and emotional changes, is more likely to react to environmental difficulties in a severe way.

The symptoms shown are nearly all concerned with some behaviour difficulty; pilfering, a common effect of deprivation, is the most frequent problem reported; wandering and truancy, the sign of a restless, discontented child, occurs frequently; and incontinence, symptomatic of aggressive feeling or anxiety, usually occurs together with the other difficulties.

The analysis of the home circumstances is the most revealing. In only 8 out of the 50 cases can the home circumstances be described as normal, with both parents living and taking joint responsibility for the children. In all other cases something has occurred to break up the home—death, desertion, divorce, unfaithfulness, being the most common. Step-parents, adoptive parents, or institutions have been responsible for the child's upbringing, and it seems evident that the child has suffered from the loss of his own parents, and has not been able to adjust satisfactorily to substitute parents.

These children have either suffered emotional rejection or material neglect or both. Such an environ-

ment is a breeding ground for unhappiness, discontent, and delinquency. In fact, such a response may be regarded as a natural outcome of, or reaction to, such circumstances, when neither affection nor security is known to the child.

Tables I-IV give details of this study.

TABLE I

| No. | SEX. | NAME. | AGE. | I.Q. | SYMPTOMS. | HOME CIRCUMSTANCES |
|-----|------|-------|------|------|--|---|
| 1. | F | B. L. | 11 | 90 | Pilfering. Abnormal appetite. | Mother divorced. Child living with stepmother. Evidence of rejection by stepmother. |
| 2. | F. | F. C. | 11 | 108 | Difficult behaviour. Contipation | Adopted at 3½ years. Foster-mother anxious and neurotic. |
| 3. | F. | L. A. | 9 | 95 | Difficult behaviour. Stubbornness. Jealousy | Bad relationship with younger sister. Mother favours sister. |
| 4. | M. | R. B. | 11 | 98 | Lying. Stealing. Defiance | Mother dead, Stepmother favours younger step-sister. Father away from home. |
| 5. | M. | T. R. | 6 | 89 | Soling. Wetting. Restlessness. Destructiveness | Mother drinks and is immoral. Children neglected. Father indifferent. |
| 6. | M | C. G. | 6 | 100 | Pilfering and wandering | Mother dead. Stepmother indifferent towards child. |
| 7. | M. | D. N. | 8 | 96 | Wetting and soling | Mother immoral. Father away from home. Neglect and cruelty. |
| 8. | M. | B. B. | 7 | 109 | Pilfering | First four years with grandparents. Mother favours younger brother and sister. |
| 9 | M. | B. J. | 9 | 95 | Soling. Wetting. Truancy | Parents separated. Father immoral. Neglect. |
| 10. | M | T. R. | 12 | 113 | Aggressiveness. Truancy | Rejection. An immoral household. Neglect. |
| 11. | F. | W. C. | 9 | 121 | Pilfering. Soling | Insecure and over-stimulating atmosphere. Parents unreliable. |
| 12. | M | R. M. | 11 | 136 | Stealing | Father unknown. Child illegitimate. Mother deserted. Child adopted. Adoptive mother dead. |
| 13 | F. | S. J. | 7 | 100 | Difficult and excitable behaviour | Born out of wedlock. "Minded" and cared for by stepfather. |
| 14. | M. | W. M. | 6 | 95 | Pilfering. Lying | Father dead. Mother a prostitute. Grandmother senile. Neglect and rejection. |
| 15. | F. | K. J. | 11 | 115 | Defiant and difficult behaviour. Asthma | Mother nervous; tends to favour younger sister. |
| 16 | F. | S. D. | 13 | 104 | Stealing | Illegitimate. Mother dead. Child cared for by old ladies. |
| 17. | M. | G. T. | 6 | 115 | Pilfering. Wandering | Mother immoral. Mother committed suicide. Neglect. |

Note.—The Intelligence Quotient (I.Q.) is a ratio, reckoned in terms of 100 units, between mental age (as determined by score in a standardised intelligence test) and chronological age,

$$\text{i.e., } I.Q. = \frac{\text{mental age}}{\text{chronological age}} \times 100.$$

TABLE II

| No. | SEX. | NAME | AGE. | I Q. | SYMPTOMS | HOME CIRCUMSTANCES. |
|-----|------|-------|------|------|--|--|
| 18. | M. | G. P. | 10 | 111 | Pilfering. Truancy. Soiling | Illegitimate. Child cared for by grandmother, stepfather, and finally mother. Cruelty. |
| 19. | M. | M. S. | 6 | 100 | Wandering. Unruliness | Mother dead. Child living with foster-parents. |
| 20. | M. | H. P. | 11 | 106 | Enuresis | Mother dead. Child evacuated. |
| 21. | M. | B. A. | 6 | 111 | Violent behaviour. Delinquencies | Father a drunkard. Parents separated. Insecurity. |
| 22. | F. | U. A. | 5 | 110 | Difficult behaviour | Father dead. Mother working full-time. New marriage prospected. |
| 23. | M. | M. T. | 5 | 95 | Nervousness | Father in Forces |
| 24. | M. | E. H. | 10 | 95 | Stealing. Wandering | Father deserted. Marital troubles. |
| 25. | M. | W. J. | 13 | 100 | Pilfering | Father dead. Mother associating with a soldier. Insecurity. |
| 26. | M. | W. S. | 6 | 107 | Sulky, stubborn behaviour | Mother associated with lodger, then deserted family. |
| 27. | M. | W. T. | 5 | 97 | Enuresis | Mother associating with a soldier. |
| 28. | M. | A. C. | 7 | 103 | Soiling. Pilfering | Father in Forces. Mother favoured other children in family. |
| 29. | M. | T. D. | 10 | 117 | Pilfering | Mother neurotic; tends to reject child. |
| 30. | M. | J. D. | 8 | 103 | Truancy. Pilfering | Child illegitimate. Father a bigamist. Neglect. |
| 31. | F. | C. G. | 7 | 88 | Sex play and interference | Unemployment and financial difficulties in early childhood |
| 32. | M. | S. D. | 7 | 101 | Enuresis. Temper. Quarrelsomeness | Child in institution. |
| 33. | M. | P. T. | 7 | 97 | Pilfering. Difficult behaviour. Enuresis | Father in Forces. Mother immoral. Child spent a period in an institution. |
| 34. | F. | H. B. | 7 | 96 | Nervousness | Father deserted, tends to be indifferent towards child. |

TABLE III

| N.O. | SEX. | NAME. | AGE. | I.Q. | SYMPTOMS. | HOME CIRCUMSTANCES. |
|------|------|-------|------|------|---|--|
| 35. | M. | G. L. | 9 | 108 | Pilfering. Wandering | Abandoned. Placed in institution. |
| 36. | F. | N. B. | 9 | 94 | Screaming. Fears | Mother dead. Child cared for by stepmother |
| 37. | M. | D. S. | 11 | 82 | Pilfering | Insecurity. Mother cruel. Child placed in institution. Neglect. |
| 38. | F. | S. P. | 11 | 70 | Pilfering. Soiling and wetting | Mother dead. Child cared for by grandmother, aunt, and finally stepmother. Rejection. |
| 39. | M. | M. C. | 10 | 125 | Stealing | Mother dead. Child cared for in Nursery Home and then by stepmother. Rejection. |
| 40. | M. | P. Y. | 8 | 85 | Pilfering | Divorce. Economic difficulties. Neglect. Lack of affection. |
| 41. | F. | J. J. | 7 | 112 | Difficult behaviour | Father dead. Child cared for by aunt, mother, foster-parents, and then again by mother. Insecurity and lack of affection. |
| 42. | M. | R. E. | 8 | 82 | Pilfering. Tempers. Difficult behaviour | Father dead. Child placed in institution. Later adopted. Neglect. |
| 43. | M. | E. R. | 8 | 80 | Wandering. Truancy. Pilfering. Lying. Smoking | Father abroad. A large family. Poor standards of care. Neglect. |
| 44. | F. | K. J. | 12 | 105 | Lying. Pilfering | Child in workhouse, then boarded out. Mother unstable and immoral. Child adopted. Adoptive father died. Adoptive mother remarried. |
| 45. | M. | C. G. | 10 | 108 | Pilfering. Difficult behaviour | Poor standards of care. Father indifferent to child. |
| 46. | M. | W. S. | 6 | 107 | Sulky, difficult behaviour | Mother deserted. Divorce. Neglect. Rejection. |
| 47. | M. | W. D. | 5 | 103 | Pilfering. Lying | An unwanted baby. Mother very restricting. |
| 48. | M. | B. J. | 11 | 105 | Enuresis | Father indifferent. Mother overprotective. Mild rejection. |
| 49. | M. | M. B. | 6 | 96 | Out of hand | Father in Forces. Mother neglectful. Poor standards of care. |
| 50. | M. | B. I. | 8 | 95 | Pilfering. Truancy | Mother dead. |

TABLE IV.—SUMMARY OF DATA

Number of cases . 50 { Boys . 36-72%
 Girls . 14-28%.

| I Q. | No | Age | No | SYMPTOM ¹ | No | HOME CIRCUMSTANCES ² | No. |
|------|----|-----|----|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-----|
| 120 | 3 | 5 | 4 | Pilfering . . . | 26 (72%) | Normal . . . | 8 |
| 110 | 8 | 6 | 9 | Difficult behaviour . | 18 | Death (father mother 6) | 17 |
| 100 | 18 | 7 | 8 | Incontinence . . . | 12 | Adultery . . . | 11 |
| 90 | 14 | 8 | 6 | Wandering and truancy | 11 | Bigamy . . . | 1 |
| 80+ | 6 | 9 | 5 | Nervousness . . . | 3 | Desertion (father mother 3) | 5 |
| 70 | 1 | 10 | 5 | Sex play . . . | 1 | Separation . . . | 3 |
| | | 11 | 9 | Digestive disturbance . | 1 | Step-parents (father mother 5) | 7 |
| | | 12 | 2 | | | Adoptive parents . . | 4 |
| | | 13 | 2 | | | Illegitimacy . . . | 6 |
| | | | | | | Institution . . . | 6 |

¹ Twenty-two children show more than one symptom.

² In eighteen cases the child is classified under more than one class of home circumstances.

CHAPTER III

A STUDY OF CHILDREN IN SUBSTITUTE HOMES

IN this chapter I am going to describe certain children in some detail, and attempt to give a picture of their feelings, their thoughts, and their attitudes, following a psychological study of each child. I will also give some account of their past and present environment.

A HOME FOR MALADJUSTED CHILDREN

I was fortunate in obtaining a first-hand impression of one particular Home, supported by voluntary contributions, which is doing most interesting and valuable work. It appears to succeed in no small measure in catering for the material and the emotional needs of the difficult child who has to be removed from his own home.

There are 38 children in the Home, and more boys than girls. Their ages range from 2 to 16 years, the majority being between 8 and 11 years. This particular Home is one of a large group of Homes, but it has a rather special function to perform. The only passport required for admission is that the child is "destitute of affection and care" and presents problems of behaviour which have rendered him unacceptable in a foster-home or, indeed, in any other Home. They are thus a group of unadjusted children who have

usually been tried¹ out in several different Homes before admission here. Often the N.S.P.C.C. was instrumental in removing them from their own homes in the first instance. Many of them have been separated from their parents for many years, and often from their brothers and sisters.

There are eight members of staff: the superintendent, very fully trained,¹ one housemother, a trained nurse, who is very experienced and competent, two housemothers who are new to the work, and four students in training who have had very little experience and have considerable difficulty in handling some of the children. The staff have three weeks' holiday in the year, six week-end leaves, two hours off every day, and three hours on Sunday. A half-day a week is arranged, but cannot always be taken by senior staff. Night-duty is undertaken on rota for a six-week period with corresponding rest periods in the day. Students are allowed one extra hour per school day for study.

Premises.—The Home consists of a large, handsome mansion-house with excellent grounds and is attached to a farm in a lovely country district.

Dormitories are small and usually contain about five children of mixed ages—the oldest child being “in charge.” The girls have two large playrooms with the boys and one small “den,” only 5 ft. high, where they can play house and keep their dolls and occasionally have tea-parties. The boys also have an indoor playroom, a large squash court (also used by the girls) for lively and noisy games. The experiment of a “parlour” playroom, where the best toys and the

¹ Her training includes that of a psychiatric social worker.

library are kept and where the play is supervised, is being tried out to combat the great amount of damage and destruction which is done to toys. Each group, which remains constant for sleep and meal-times, has a turn in this playroom for quiet games and tea-parties. There are four "housegirls," who have left school, who help with the housework.

Problems.—These children show a great variety of problems.

Tantrums and *screaming* are reported among several of the older children as well as the younger ones.

Head-banging and *crying* at night are reported in one case.

Destructiveness is very common. Other children's toys and their own are quickly damaged, and the children complain that their own lockers are not sacrosanct. The matron takes charge of anything very precious, available on request, and she keeps pocket-money and sweets for each child.

Pilfering of food, sweets, fruit, and trinkets is widespread. However, it is usually of a minor character and often to give away to other children.

Masturbation is frequently noted.

Incontinence, especially enuresis, occurs mostly among new entrants and very young children. At present there is only one older child who is a persistent bed-wetter; there are three occasional bed-wetters and four very young children who are enuretics. Soiling occurs in three or four cases.

The atmosphere of the Home is orderly, but happy. The children are certainly well fed and well cared for. They are lively and talkative and most demonstrative to a stranger, being lavish in their caresses and obviously

most appreciative of individual attention. Birthdays are scrupulously honoured. Shopping with pocket-money is often arranged. Christmas is a most festive occasion. The children attend the ordinary school, and some have won scholarships to a Secondary Technical School. A few are very backward. Excursions (*e.g.*, to the seaside) are frequently arranged during the holidays and on Saturdays during term.

The superintendent has a fairly full knowledge of each child's home background, and expert psychiatric and psychological assistance is available to some extent.

It is interesting to note how quickly the children seem to gain security and reduce their anxieties in this atmosphere. Enuresis usually clears up quite quickly when almost no reference is made to it, and certainly no punishment meted out. Adolescent tantrums flare up now and again, but the general policy of "come and talk about the trouble quietly" or a little personal attention or a short rest in bed seems to soothe many troubles. Nurse's attention to minor ills and ailments is freely sought and freely given as the children seem to need so much of this kind of mothering. Each child is given a toy of his very own on admission, and these are greatly treasured. The house dog is very popular and the recipient of many childish confidences. Attachments to members of staff are intense and exclusive, and minor jealousy situations are common. These children have an abnormal craving for appreciation and recognition, and usually thrive on praise but wither on criticism, however kindly meant.

The presence of brothers and sisters and, above all, the permanence of important members of staff can help

these children a great deal. “Father substitutes” have to be supplied by schoolmasters, farmers, the vicar, and other outsiders, but good friends of the Home who certainly give most valuable psychological help to the children.

The following is a summary of eleven children whose histories I was able to study, who made drawings for me and with whom I talked in an attempt to understand their feelings and attitudes a little.

INSTITUTIONAL CHILDREN

Intelligence.

11 children. Above average : 3 (Av.+) .
 4 boys. Average : 6 (Av) .
 7 girls. Below average : 2.

| NAME. | SEX. | AGE. | I Q. | SYMPTOMS. | HOME CIRCUMSTANCES. |
|----------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|---|---|
| 1. S. V | F. | 10 | Av + | Screaming Difficult behaviour | Mother married adoptive father. Many changes of Homes Boarded with aunt. Admitted to Home 1941. |
| 2. S. P | F. | 14 | Av | Pilfering. Lying | Abandoned by young mother in institution. On Public Assistance Boarded out for ten years, then admitted to Home. |
| 3. M. T. | F. | 10 | 100 | Tantrums | Illegitimate Mother feckless. Five different Homes. Boarded out and will return to foster-home Admitted to Home 1941. |
| 4. ¹ { R. J. E. J. | F. M. | 12 9 | 82 100 | { Wandering. Truancy | { Mother died Children neglected. Father rather dull. Admitted to Home 1944. |
| 6. ² { J. P. M. P. | F. F. | 16 12 | 82 115 | { Difficult and childish behaviour | { Mother serving prison sentence for keeping a brothel. Marital disagreements. Children neglected Admitted to Home 1945 |
| 8. ¹ { B. O. J. O. | M. F. | 9 10 | 90 105 | { Enuresis. Pilfering Lying Backwardness Masturbation | { Mother ill in hospital Seventeen years old when married. Separation of parents. Elder brother died Children neglected. Admitted to Home 1944. |
| 10. W. J. | M. | 10 | 99 | Enuresis | Mother immoral and unreliable. Child illegitimate Three husbands Mother in hospital. |
| 11. H. K. | M. | 5 | Av | Enuresis Tantrums Wandering | Father in Army. Family bombed out. Home broken up Neglected. N.C.P.C. applied for admission to Home. |

¹ Brother and sister.

² Sisters.

The clinical method of study used was the Projection Method, described in detail in Raven's book, "Controlled Projection." The child is asked to draw something—"a picture or a design or just scribble"—anything he chooses, and when he has started he is told that while he is drawing he will be told a story and he will be asked to help tell the story. He is urged to keep on drawing all the time and just answer the questions in any way he likes by the first thing that comes into his head. This is to try to reduce conscious control to a minimum, and seek to tap his more unconscious thoughts and hopes and fears. An attempt is made to elucidate his attitude to authority and to his parents—his anxieties, his feelings of guilt, his unsatisfied desires, and his general outlook. He is urged to talk as much as he will, and his remarks in answer to the set questions may be followed up as far as he is willing to go. In some ways this method is similar to the standardised interview, but it suits the child better than direct questioning. It is clear that in the majority of cases the child projects himself into the child in the story, and describes himself. In other cases he seems to be describing himself as he would like to be. Often the personal pronoun slips in instead of the third person, and the child tells his own story. Obviously such a method can only show up the highlights of the child's emotional life, but the results are often very interesting and suggestive in view of the child's personal history.

The following is the story completion test as used, giving the statements made by the psychologist and the questions asked of the child :—

CONTROLLED PROJECTION (1944)

Arranged by JOHN C. RAVEN

Questions

1. Once there was a boy (girl).
 - (a) What did he like doing ?
 - (b) Whom did he like being (playing) with ?
 - (c) Whom did he not like being (playing) with ?
2. One day this boy went out with his mother and father and they got cross with him.
 - (a) What was it about—what happened ?
 - (b) How did it end ?
3. One day his father and mother were cross with each other.
 - (a) What made them cross ?
 - (b) What happened then ?
4. This boy had a friend he liked very much. One day he said, "You come with me and I'll show you something, but you mustn't tell anyone because it's a secret."
 - (a) What did he show him ?
 - (b) What did they do ?
5. One day this boy had a fright.
 - (a) What happened ?
6. This boy used to make up things. You know, sometimes they were true and sometimes they weren't
 - (a) He told the other boys one of his stories. What did he tell them ?
 - (b) Was it true ? Why did he tell them it ?
 - (c) One day he told his mother and father one of his stories. What did he tell them ?
 - (d) Was it true ? Why did he tell them it ?
7. When this boy went to bed
 - (a) What did he think about ?
 - (b) One evening he cried. What was the matter ?
8. When he fell asleep
 - (a) What did he dream about ?
 - (b) He woke up in the night. What made him wake up ?
 - (c) One night he had a lovely dream. Someone (a fairy) came and said, "If you say what you really want, it will come true." What did he say he wanted ?
 - (d) Then he was given a lot of money (£1,000). What did he do with it ?

9. Before he went away the person (fairy) said, "You are growing up. Do you want to grow up?"
 - (a) What did he say?
 - (b) *If to grow up*—What did he want to do when he grew up?
 - (c) *If not*—Did he want things to stay just as they were for always, or did he want anything different?
 - (d) What did he want different? What did he want to stay the same?
10. That's the end. Did you like it?
 - (a) What do you like about the boy in the story, etc.?
 - (b) What do you dislike about him, etc.?
 - (c) Is he like you? Why? (Or why not?)
11. What have you been drawing?
 - (a) What is it?
 - (b) What does it remind you of?

[*Note.*—For additional questions used, see footnotes on pages 45, 46, and 47.]

The following are studies of several of the children whose replies were especially interesting:—

J. P. (aged 16½ years, I.Q. 82) was proving a helpful, willing "housegirl," although she was often rather silly and childish, and she always ran after "anyone in trousers."

She was removed from her own home two years ago because her mother kept "a house of ill-fame," grossly neglected her family, and is now serving a prison sentence. There was some disharmony between the parents.

Her two sisters, one older and one younger, were also in the Home. When interviewed she tended to be slow, dour, and rather reserved. She drew a house of a rather childish type, a ball, some sweets, a book, and a tree.

She said the little girl in the story "would *not* want to grow up." She would wish for a bicycle, and for money to buy pretty clothes. She might worry because "she couldn't find one of her dolls." She would dream about "Fairylane," and when she went to bed she would "say her prayers."

She would like to work in a canteen when she leaves. She did not seem to know about her mother being in prison, and said she gets letters from her and "thought she would come to see her when she had time."

This seems to be a picture of an immature, rather dull girl who has been over-stimulated by her unusual home environment.

S. P., a girl of 14 years of average intelligence, was abandoned by her young mother in an Institution in babyhood. She spent one year in a Public Assistance Institution, then in a Home, then she was boarded out for ten years. This plan worked well until her foster-mother began to take in soldiers as boarders. She felt left out and started to pilfer and prove difficult. She was tried in another foster-home. She failed to settle and was transferred to the present Home.

When interviewed she was pale, rather depressed and apathetic. She was said to be unreliable, to pilfer food and trinkets, and to demand much personal attention.

She only produced a few stereotyped lines when asked to draw, but her results on projection tests were rather illuminating. She thought the girl in the story was frightened because she had done something wrong, and when she went to bed at night "she asked God to forgive her." She dreamt "that she was a very good girl." She would like a "big doll's house" and, if given lots of money, would buy "sweets for herself, presents for other people, and save the rest." She did not think "the girl would want to grow up." The girl in the *sketch*¹ "worried because she couldn't get her homework right and was afraid that the people would be cross." She would dream that she had "lots of pretty clothes." She herself sometimes dreams that a man is standing by her bed and is going to hurt her (a typical adolescent dream).

She is employed as a "housegirl" in the Home, is constantly seeking appreciation, and seems concerned that she does not do things right. She is difficult and moody. She has never known her mother and is constantly asking about her and wishing she could see her, but apparently the mother cannot be traced.

She wants to be a shop assistant when she leaves at 16 years, but she is happy and likes the staff in the Home.

W. J. (aged 10 years, I.Q. 99) was reported to be an unstable child, who suffered much neglect at the hands of an immoral

¹ *The girl in the sketch.*

This test is usually used only for adults. A full description can be found in Raven's book. The subject is asked to imagine what the girl is doing, and to describe her thoughts, feelings, etc.

mother who had three "husbands" and several illegitimate children. He was removed from home through the agency of the N.S.P.C.C. He was very disturbed because his mother had called the new baby by the same name as himself! He felt thrust out of his mother's affection and built a fantasy home in his own mind. He said his mother was in hospital having a baby and sent lots of letters to him and chocolates, and his father was working on the railway and was coming to see him soon.

He has sought security and allegiance in the "Home" and has attached himself to the matron. When he grows up he is going to be a bus-driver for the Home and "drive all the children to school and take them out." He also has an ambition to have "a racing-car and an orchard with lots of apples and a hop garden."

He thought the little boy in the story would want to "grow up" (and so be big and powerful and safe presumably). He told "a secret" about some apples he had got and "a lie" that "they were his" and "really they were stolen." He himself has a persistent fantasy about a wolf who frightens him, and once dreamt that his "mother was dead."

He thought the *boy in the picture*¹ was happy, but would like a large house and bags of sweets and chocolate and a ship.

In the *box*² he imagined much treasure put there by a king to keep it safe, even though the king might die.

He is a very friendly, talkative child, eager for appreciation and recognition, and boasts of his school achievements and his ability to draw well. He drew a house with "a lovely drain-pipe" and a racing-car in a garage and lots of toys, animals, and "the treasure."

He is a persistent enuretic. He gives a picture of an insecure child—"with the wolf at the door," who needs possessions and praise and attachment to someone and some place to give him security and peace of mind.

S. V., a 10-year-old girl from Wales with an attractive manner, had spent most of her life since the age of five years in Homes or foster-homes. Despite her smiling manner she was reported to be self-willed, difficult, and to have rather frequent tempers. She told me she could not remember her

¹ *The boy in the picture.*

These tests are usually used only for adults. A full description can be found in Raven's book. The subject is asked to imagine what the boy is doing and to describe his thoughts, feelings, etc.

mother because she had been evacuated at the beginning of the war and had had no contact with her since. Her mother was reported to have married her own adoptive father and the child was the result. She appeared to have no recollection of her father, only of a foster-mother with whom she had stayed for a considerable time.

Although reported to be an intelligent little girl, her responses to the Story Completion Test included several references to "playing truant and picking marigolds in the marsh." She would *wish* to "know her lessons very well" and "to learn how to read." If she had a lot of money "she would squander it and go to a ball and tap-dance in a fairy dance." She would prefer a different kind of life—"a fairy life"—but she doesn't think the girl in the story would want to grow up.

The *box*² would contain treasure, jewels, a ring which would be "given away to all the little children," and then "the man who owned the box would get married and put the ring on the lady's finger" (this is vividly illustrated).

She wants to be a nurse when she grows up, and made two references to accidents and drew an ambulance going along the road; also a picture of "Rock-a-bye-Baby with the wind blowing and the baby in the treetop."

The interest in babies and nursing may be a form of compensation for her own lack of mothering in childhood.

B. O. (aged 9 years, I.Q. 90) was a rather slow, matter-of-fact youngster. In his home there had been family disagreement and the parents were now separated. His mother, who was 17 years of age when she married, had been seriously ill with arthritis and had to spend much time in hospital. This resulted in much neglect. The first-born son died, and B. had always felt rather rejected and unable to make up the loss to his mother. The older sister, aged 10 years, is a clever little girl who has just won a scholarship to a Technical School, and is no problem. B., however, steals, lies, is very quarrelsome, and used to be enuretic.

He had recently spent a holiday with his mother by the sea, and his drawings depicted seascapes with a battleship and aeroplane. (He would be in the aeroplane with his father bombing the ships: his mother and sister would be in the house getting tea.)

² The *Box* test is also usually used only for adults. The subject is shown a picture of a box and asked to draw and tell what he imagines would be inside.

He thought the little boy in the story would dream about Father Christmas, that he would like a bicycle, and he would want to grow up.

*Road Picture*¹.—He thought the road “goes to a big village where there are factories that make toffee. There is a lorry going along with bread in it.” He himself would like to have a car when he grows up and work for a shop and deliver toys.

The identification with a good and powerful father figure is rather evident in this.

He said that he liked the Home and his school quite well, but wished that he could read.

¹ *Road picture*—usually used only for adults. The subject is shown a picture of a road, with houses and factory chimneys in the distance. He is asked to describe who might be travelling the road and what he thinks is happening in the town.

The Table below across both pages is a summary of the results of ten of the children in this Home on the Story Completion Test.

| NAME. | AGE. | I.Q. | SECRET. | FRIGHT | DREAM |
|-----------------|------|-------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| E. J. (Boy) | 9 | 100 | Place with lots of toys | Someone trying to steal toys | About what he had done |
| R. J. (Girl) | 12 | 82 | Bird's nest | A rat | About fairies |
| B. O. (Boy) | 9 | 100 | Diamonds | Someone stealing the diamonds | About Father Christmas About a murder |
| W. J. (Boy) | 10 | 90 | Apples | A wolf | About an orchard About a wolf |
| S. P. (Girl) | 14 | Av. | Present for mother and father | She'd done something wrong | That she was a very good girl |
| J. P. (Girl) | 16 | 82 | A cave | Wall of cave cracked | About fairyland |
| M. E. (Girl) | 10 | 100 | Bird's nest | Girl watching her by nest | Fairies dancing |
| S. V. (Girl) | 10 | Av. + | Squirrel's nest | Nest dropped out of tree | That she knew how to read |
| M. P. (Girl) | 12 | 115 | Cave | Rock had fallen in cave | About burglars |
| J. O. (Girl) | 10 | 105 | Bicycle for Christmas | She fell from a tree | That mother had died |

A HOME FOR DESTITUTE CHILDREN

In another Voluntary Home for twenty-six boys, in which I have had much opportunity to talk with the master, matron, and the visiting doctor, who takes a keen personal interest in the Home, I was able to interview nine boys.

The purpose of the Home is to take boys who are destitute for one reason or another until a suitable foster-home can be found for them. They attend ordinary schools in the city. At the week-end they are allowed to go out in twos and threes, if considered responsible enough, down to the town or into the parks. They have good playrooms and fairly good equipment. They have a pleasant garden and a large asphalt

| WISH. | MONEY. | GROW UP. | CAREER. |
|----------------------|--|----------|--------------------------|
| Clockwork bus | Present to mother | Yes | Soldier. |
| A baby sister | Bicycle Go to seaside | Yes | Nurse. |
| Bicycle | Present to mother | Yes | Driver and deliver toys. |
| Orchard | Racing-car Train | Yes | Bus-driver. |
| Doll's house | Sweets Presents | No | Shop assistant. |
| Bicycle | Clothes | No | Canteen worker. |
| To go to pictures | Case Sewing set Doll Bicycle | Yes | Nurse. |
| To know her lessons | Squander it at a ball in a fairly dance | No | Nurse. |
| Doll's pram and doll | Put in bank Presents to mother and father | No | Work in Woolworth's. |
| Watch | Presents to mother and to friends Go to seaside Save it | Yes | |

playground, while a near-by park is frequently used for cricket or football games or picnicking. Their ages range from 7 to 14 years, and many have their own brothers with them. Most boys have a particular lady visitor who "adopts" a boy and takes him out, writes to him, and generally makes it her business to keep in touch with him.

The atmosphere of the Home is a friendly, natural one. A good deal of freedom and noisy play is allowed, and there appear to be no undue restrictions or repressive measures. On the material side arrangement and care are excellent. Enuretics improve quickly in this atmosphere. Pilfering is rare, but the staff complain of a good deal of destructiveness which, of course, may be only "wear and tear" in the circumstances. Running away is uncommon, but has occurred. There is one case of sleep-walking at present.

It is interesting to note that all the nine boys whom I interviewed (ages 8 to 13 years) said they thought the "boy in the story would want to grow up," and the careers they selected for themselves for the fictitious hero of the story indicate on the whole an adventurous and forward-looking attitude without a great need for security or showing a fear of the future. They are as follows:—

| <i>Their own Choice.</i> | | <i>Their Choice for the Boy in the Story.</i> | |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|
| Bus-driver . . . | 2 | Engineer . . . | 2 |
| Sailor . . . | 2 | Bus-driver . . . | 1 |
| Engineer . . . | 2 | Lorry-driver . . . | 1 |
| Soldier . . . | 1 | Sailor . . . | 1 |
| Farmer . . . | 1 | Airman . . . | 1 |
| Printer . . . | 1 | Painter (of aeroplanes) | 1 |
| | | Gardener . . . | 1 |
| | | Magician . . . | 1 |

This perhaps provides some evidence to show that these boys feel fairly secure. The presence of their own brothers and sisters, their contact with their own homes where possible, and the keen personal interest taken in their development and well-being by the staff and friends of the Home probably accounts for this in large measure.

It is interesting to find that six out of the nine say "the boy in the story would save some of his money" while spending the rest on the special things he wanted. This may augur well for the future and suggest that these boys are able to plan and look ahead with some confidence.

It is worth quoting from the replies of three children in some detail.

S. A., a 9-year-old (I.Q. 104) who had only been in the Home for four months gave very normal replies to the Story Completion Test. His desires seemed to centre round a new pair of football boots, a football, a pea-shooter, and a pair of roller-skates, and though he "might save some money," he "would spend the rest on cakes, sweets, apples, and pears." The boy in the story would want to grow up and be a lorry-driver, while he himself would prefer to be a bus-driver. His *secret* was a "bird's nest," and his mother was cross with him because he had been fighting and made a boy's nose bleed. After he had finished the test, with a very little prompting, he began to tell his own story. "My stepfather is a very cruel man. He hits me. My father died. He was robbed by a burglar and then shot. My mum says I can come home when my stepfather dies or goes away, but we shan't have anywhere to live. I would like to write to my mum. I don't think she has my address."

Apparently he was illegitimate, and his case was taken up by the N.S.P.C.C. on the grounds of mental cruelty by the stepfather. He is now beginning to settle down and is less nervous than he appeared at first, but he has recently been sleep-walking and seems to have rather disturbed sleep.

D. A., a rather dull boy of 12 years, who wanted to go farm-

ing when he was grown-up, seemed to have conflicting pictures of a father figure in his own mind. "The boy was frightened because a policeman might be after him for stealing apples from the orchard," and "he dreamt about Father Christmas coming, and when he woke up there weren't any toys for him." His *wish* would be for a Christmas cake and lots of toys, and if he was given £1,000 "he'd save it and buy a car when he left school, and then he'd join the Navy."

This boy was an orphan, his father having died when he was 10 years, and his mother six months ago. He had lived for a time with his married sisters, who appeared to be rather irresponsible and immoral. He had been in this Home for about six months.

S. K., a very intelligent 12-year-old, said that the boy's *secret* was some hidden treasure in a cave, and he was *frightened* "by a scream in the cave which might have been a parrot or might have been a ghost." He had told a lie that he "was going to New Zealand in a large ship." He thought about this lie at night in bed, and cried because he was ill or perhaps because his "mother had died." He dreamt about a trip abroad and woke up because he thought the ship was going down and he was drowning. He would like "a bike, a football, football boots, and a piano." He would save some of the £1,000 and "spend the rest on a bike and piano." The boy would want to be an engineer on the railway, or make cars in a factory.

His replies rather suggest some inner insecurity feelings, coupled with a brave and adventurous spirit. He had suffered at the hands of immoral parents and was taken away from his home by a rescue worker when he was about 6 years old. He had three older brothers, all intelligent and all in the same Home, and all appearing fairly competent to deal with the normal difficulties of life.

Table "A" across the top of pages 54 and 55 is a summary of the results of nine of the boys on the Story Completion Test.

A STUDY OF CHILDREN UNDER THE CARE OF A PUBLIC ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE LIVING IN COTTAGE HOMES AND ATTENDING ORDINARY PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

Six Children of Inferior Intelligence.—Ages 6 to 9 years.

I.Q.'s 59, 62, 68, 71, 77, 81. Five girls, one boy.

Five Children of Normal Intelligence.—Ages 9 to 11 years. I.Q.'s 94, 101, 102, 105, 114. Three boys, two girls.

The following are descriptions of the dull children, all being educated in a Special Class :—

1. Shy, nervous, slow in approach to difficulties, poor concentration, easy to manage.
2. Babyish, very demonstrative, friendly, excitable with other children.
3. Anxious, insecure, nervous, apprehensive.
4. Restless, appears rather unhappy.
5. Restless, inattentive, untruthful, cannot be trusted.
6. Shy, inhibited, talks in a whisper, apathetic.

It is noteworthy that with individual attention and patient understanding these children improve in every way at school. They gain in confidence, improve in behaviour, and progress in school work.

It is commonly found that institutional children tend to be duller than children from normal homes ; and although in some cases this is due to inherent poor intelligence, the dullness is intensified by institutional life if the child is deprived of personal attention and normal environmental experiences. They have so few of the contacts with everyday life normal to ordinary children. In few cases can they go shopping or have much opportunity to spend money. They seldom

TABLE "A"

| NAME. | AGE. | I.Q. | SECRET. | FRIGHT | DREAM. |
|-------|------|------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| M R. | 9 | .. | Eggs in nest | Wolf in woods | Walking down a street |
| D. T. | 9 | 74 | Diamond | Snake | About Lord Jesus |
| H. R. | 9 | 107 | Golden jewels | Ghost | Playing with children —a nice dream |
| S. K. | 12 | 124 | Hidden treasure | Ghost | Going to New Zealand in a boat |
| D. A. | 12 | 81 | Going to orchard to steal apples | Policeman after him | About Santa Claus |
| E. J. | 13 | .. | . | Boys found out about his secret | About his playmates |
| S. C. | 13 | 104 | Secret hiding-place | Hiding-place discovered | About an adventure with smugglers |
| S. A. | 9 | 104 | Bird's nest | Birds flown | About football and roller skates |
| D. S. | 8 | 100 | .. | .. | A nice dream |

TABLE "B"

| SEX. | AGE | I.Q. | SECRET. | FRIGHT. | DREAM. |
|------|-----|------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Boy | 9 | 101 | Punch and Judy show he's made | Snow man that looked like a ghost | About his birthday party |
| Girl | 10 | 105 | Present from uncle | .. | That uncle had come home |
| Girl | 10 | 94 | A party | Nearly got run over | A nice dream about mother and father |
| Boy | 10 | 104 | Some pet mice | Fox got his pet mice | That he had found his mice |
| Boy | 11 | 114 | A big mushroom | Dog jumping up | An accident to one of his friends |

| WISH. | MONEY. | GROW UP. | BOY'S CAREER. | OWN CAREER. |
|---|---|----------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Motor car | Car. Bicycle | Yes | Engineer | Sailor. |
| Bicycle | Bicycle Sweets, oranges, bananas | Yes | .. | Bus-driver. |
| Golden jewels | Save Buy car for mother and father | Yes | Magician | Engineer. |
| Bicycle, piano, foot- ball and boots | Save for bicycle and piano | Yes | Engineer or car manufacturer | Pfinter. |
| Christmas cake and toys | Save and buy a car | Yes | Sailor | Farmer. |
| Football boots | Presents to his friends and toys | Yes | Gardener | Engineer. |
| Stamps and stamp album | Save and give a party to his friends | Yes | Airman | Sailor. |
| Pea-shooter and foot- ball boots | Save and spend some on sweets, cakes, and fruit | Yes | Lorry-driver | Bus-driver. |
| Bicycle | Save it and spend it on toys | Yes | Painter | Soldier. |

| WISH. | MONEY | GROW UP. | CAREER. | DRAWING. |
|--|---|----------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| An electric train | Keep it and buy a house | Yes | Bricklayer | Boy running in the snow. |
| A doll | Presents for mother, father, and uncle | Yes | Nurse | A girl. |
| A fairy doll and a cot | Put in bank. Buy clothes | Yes | "Lady" making socks in a factory | A house and tree. |
| Some mice and a big cage Bicycle | Buy a house and lots of furniture | No | Sailor | A boy. |
| That his friend was well | Put in bank Give presents to mother, father, and all his rela- tions and play- mates | No | Work in factory then in Navy | Aeroplane. |

play in the street, or visit friends, or go picnicking, or travel in a train, or keep pets, or have personal possessions, or are allowed to "muck about in the backyard."

It has even been claimed that prolonged institutional life may have a permanently restricting effect on the development of intelligence. Children have been found to become duller and their general alertness and powers of observation to be reduced by exposure to the narrowing and routinised life of an institution. Moreover, some homeless children who have been fostered and incorporated into the life of a normal home have appeared to develop better in every way and to show more intelligence on retesting than when they were in an institution. This is indeed a serious charge against institutional life.

It is found in the ordinary school that the Home children tend to play together and also show an intense loyalty to each other. They are not noteworthy for truth-telling, and are often suspected and sometimes apprehended for petty pilfering.

These children tend to be of one of three types, or rather to show certain rather distinct characteristics—the shy, apprehensive, docile, dull, rather inhibited child who is not much trouble; the clinging, demonstrative, dependent type of child who craves the lime-light; and the difficult, destructive, unreliable, anti-social child who is often a storm centre.

One little boy of 9 years (I.Q. 101) is described as difficult, disobedient, disturbing to the class, quarrelsome, bad-tempered, sullen, and mischievous. He is also enuretic. Although intelligent, he does not make very much progress at school.

During my interview with him he told me that he had been five years in the Home, and that he liked his own home best.

His father is dead. His mother recently remarried, and now has three babies. She is coming to see him soon, and "will bring me some sweets." "I shall be going home when they have a new house" (probably only wishful thinking). "I'd like to be a bricklayer when I grow up. I like cookery and handwork best. If I had a lot of money I should keep it until I grow up and then buy a house. We can play in the Home when we have done our jobs. I clean the boots and do the bathrooms. I get fourpence a week pocket-money. We have a cinema show on Tuesdays. On Saturdays we can play in the field and visitors come. If we are too noisy we are sent to bed."

The little boy in the story would be frightened "because he saw a snow man who looked like a ghost." He dreamt "that it was his birthday next day." He wished that he had an electric train. His secret was a "Punch and Judy show that he had made." "The boy had been naughty because he had smashed a window with his ball and so he was punished."

He was a most entrancing little boy with a mischievous twinkle in his eye, and he was in his element when acting in "Snow White" as one of the dwarfs; but I think there is little doubt that he is suffering from the lack of a normal home life.

An intelligent boy of 11 years (I.Q. 114) told me that he had been eight years in the Home. "It is all right," and he liked his foster-father. When he grows up he wants a job in a factory and then in the Navy. But in the Story Completion Test he did not think the little boy would want to grow up, but would like things to stay as they were always. If he had a lot of money he would buy presents for his mother and father, his brothers and sisters, his cousins and aunts and uncles and all his playmates, and put some in the Bank. He told a remarkable, bloodthirsty story about a phantom robber climbing into aeroplanes and murdering people.

In appearance he is a quiet, unobtrusive boy, and possibly his vivid fantasy life is to compensate in part for his drab, uneventful life. He seems to crave popularity and apparently would like to be a member of a large family with a great number of relations.

Table "B" across the foot of pages 54 and 55 is a summary of the replies to the Story Completion Test of five children of average intelligence from these Homes.

COMPARATIVE RESULTS

It is perhaps of some interest to summarise the results of the Story Completion Test in regard to the twenty-four Home children studied in some detail and to compare these results with those obtained for twenty-four children living in ordinary working-class homes and who showed no anomaly of behaviour, but who appeared to all intents and purposes perfectly normal children.

DREAMS

"HOME" CHILDREN

| <i>"Nice" Dreams (19).</i> | | <i>"Nasty" Dreams (5).</i> | |
|--|---|----------------------------|---|
| About fairies . . . | 3 | About a wolf . . . | 1 |
| About Father Christmas | 2 | A burglar . . . | 1 |
| Birthdays . . . | 2 | Murder . . . | 1 |
| About mother and father | 1 | Mother's death . . . | 1 |
| About Jesus . . . | 1 | Accident . . . | 1 |
| About being a good girl . | 1 | | |
| About knowing how to read . . . | 1 | | |
| An adventure . . . | 1 | | |
| A trip abroad . . . | 1 | | |
| (Others about playing games, recent events, etc.) | | | |

ORDINARY CHILDREN

| <i>"Nice" Dreams (14).</i> | | <i>"Nasty" Dreams (10).</i> | |
|----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|---|
| Adventures . . . | 4 | Fox . . . | 1 |
| Scoring a goal . . . | 2 | Burglar . . . | 1 |
| Living in a palace . . . | 1 | Murder . . . | 1 |
| Birthday . . . | 1 | Shipwreck . . . | 1 |
| Being grown-up . . . | 1 | Being naughty . . . | 1 |
| Being a teacher . . . | 1 | Being hit . . . | 2 |
| Mother got well . . . | 1 | Necklace stolen . . . | 1 |
| A friend . . . | 1 | Lamb caught in a trap . | 1 |
| A visitor . . . | 1 | Mother gone out . . . | 1 |
| Rolling to bottom of bed | 1 | | |

There is a good deal of similarity between the two lists. The dreams of the institutional children perhaps show a greater element of wish fulfilment and come from a dreamland in the child's mind of fairies, Father Christmases, and birthdays, where one is always good or clever and where one can have exciting adventures. The other children show a more positive and constructive attitude perhaps in their "adventures" (*e.g.*, going up in an autogyro, going exploring) and their desire to grow up, and in their successful achievements (*e.g.*, winning a match, scoring a goal). It may be significant that the "nice" dreams outnumber the "nasty" dreams in the case of the Home children. Perhaps reality is so unpleasant that they need the compensation of a happy dreamland where "good" mothers and fathers can be found.

FEARS

| "HOME" CHILDREN. | | ORDINARY CHILDREN. | |
|--|----|--|---|
| Secret disclosed or damaged | 11 | Secret disclosed or damaged | 5 |
| Ghost | 3 | Ghost | 3 |
| Wolf | 2 | Murder picture | 1 |
| Dog | 1 | Mother hurt | 1 |
| Rat | 1 | Mother gone out | 1 |
| Snake | 1 | Cat in dark | 1 |
| Accident | 2 | Chased in dark | 1 |
| Being naughty | 1 | Knocking at night | 1 |
| Policeman | 1 | Rustling in woods | 1 |
| (No reply, 1) | | Hit or pinched | 3 |
| | | Knocked over | 1 |
| | | Drowning | 1 |
| | | Policeman | 1 |
| | | Spider | 1 |
| | | Sleep-walking | 1 |
| | | (No reply, 1) | |

In many respects these children show similar types of fear. It is interesting to note that the children from ordinary homes show greater anxiety about their mothers (after all, many of the others do not even know their mothers) and also greater fear of the dark and of "being hurt." This may be because the institutional child is generally more supervised, does not go out at night so often, and perhaps does not have the same opportunity to engage in childish battles as the child whose playground is the street, and whose bed-time is irregular.

| "HOME" CHILDREN. | | ORDINARY CHILDREN. | |
|--|----|--|----|
| Number who would save some of the money the fairy gives them . | 11 | Number who would save some of the money the fairy gives them . | 9 |
| Number who would spend some of the money . | 27 | Number who would spend some of the money . | 32 |
| On presents . | 9 | On presents . | 7 |
| „ toys . | 8 | „ toys . | 13 |
| „ food . | 3 | „ food . | 4 |
| „ a house . | 2 | „ useful things . | 3 |
| „ on clothes . | 2 | „ a house . | 2 |
| „ on seaside . | 2 | „ clothes . | 2 |
| „ going to a ball . | 1 | „ pets . | 1 |

Results show that the children brought up in institutions appear to have much the same desires as children at home. The wish to give presents to parents and relatives is evident in the case of the children away from their own homes, and their craving for toys—usually dolls, doll-houses, and doll-prams in the case of girls; and trains, cars, bicycles, or footballs in the case of boys—is also noticeable just as in the case of the children at home. It is satisfactory to find that

even in an "austerity" period there is no undue craving for food, or clothes, and certainly in the Homes in question the standard of care is very good. There is a great variety in replies from the 12-year-old boy who would spend the money "to get ice-cutting tools, ropes, men, and ships to go exploring," "to the girl of 13 years who would buy a pot doll and a pram and some pretty clothes for it"—both children from normal homes. The boy of 10 years who "would buy a hop garden, an orchard, a racing-car," and obviously live near the Home where he feels happy, and the little girl in the same Home who "would squander it all going to a ball and dancing a tap-dance in a fairy dance" have already been quoted—one seems to seek the security of possessions and familiar places and the other seems to crave for some experience out of the ordinary to satisfy the desire for glamour.

Finally, we can examine these children's attitudes towards the future.

THE WISH TO GROW UP

| "HOME" CHILDREN. | | ORDINARY CHILDREN | |
|------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
| Yes . 18 | No . 6 | Yes . 20 | No . 4 |

In general it seems more normal for a child to wish to grow up, and those children who reply in the negative and also select some protective or compensatory type of job such as nursing, looking after children, or working in a canteen, are perhaps those who are most insecure and most apprehensive of the future. It is probable that many of the girls in the institution both in their play and in their future work will tend to assume the rôle of the "good" mother, take

up nursing, work with children, or "marry and have lots of little children" just to compensate in part for their own unhappy and deprived childhood. The following are the results for choice of careers for the two groups :—

| "HOME" CHILDREN. | ORDINARY CHILDREN. |
|---|-----------------------|
| Compensatory . . . 5 (Nursing, child care, etc.) | Compensatory . . . 5 |
| Secure . . . 4 (<i>E.g.</i> , working in a shop, a canteen, or driving the bus for the Home.) | Secure . . . 3 |
| Constructive . . . 4 (<i>E.g.</i> , bricklayer, painter, farmer, factory worker.) | Constructive . . . 11 |
| Indicating desire for adventure . . . 6 (<i>E.g.</i> , soldier, sailor, airman.) | Adventurous . . . 2 |
| Indicating desire for power 4 (<i>E.g.</i> , bus-driver, engine-driver.) | Powerful . . . 2 |
| (Unknown, 1.) | (Unknown, 1.) |

On the whole the children from ordinary homes show a more constructive outlook than the Home children, who tend to compensate in a protective or secure job or in an adventure where they can prove their prowess to their own satisfaction, or in work implying powerfulness.

Of course, these results have no statistical validity. They are quoted because they are rather suggestive and tend to bring out the difference in outlook between the two groups in some degree.

CHAPTER IV

REMEDIES AND METHODS OF READJUSTMENT

IF one has some knowledge of the cause and the effects, how far is it possible to remedy the situation? How can we give the "unwanted" child some of the human experiences that he has missed? How can we ensure that from now on he will know something of love and security, and will feel that he *belongs* to someone and somewhere, and so regain some of his self-respect and revise his sense of values?

There are many answers to these questions, and educationists, psychologists, and sociologists have recently given much thought to this matter. There are two main lines of approach :

1. Readjustment—(a) within the home, (b) within the school.
2. Adjustment in a new environment.

READJUSTMENT WITHIN THE HOME

Obviously the first is the more important, but usually the more difficult. It is far from easy to change human relationships and human attitudes. In the foregoing I have attempted to analyse some of the conscious and unconscious motives which lie behind parental attitudes. A recent publication entitled

"Child Treatment and the Therapy of Play," by Lydia Jackson and Kathleen Todd, gives a careful analysis of parental attitudes which is helpful in this connection.

In psychiatric treatment an attempt is made to make these motives conscious and to give the parent some insight into their effect on the child. Naturally, many parents are unwilling to accept the truth about themselves, but though they may put up a show of resistance, in their innermost hearts they usually recognise the truth when they see it. The next step is to reassure them that their antagonism or hate or jealousy or anxiety is perfectly natural under the circumstances. Once it is recognised and ventilated the sting is removed and some of the strength of the feeling reduced. The expression of emotions, the release of feelings, long pent-up, help the parent to overcome them. Similarly, it is possible to explain to a child that his own actions have not caused the loss of his parents, that fundamentally he is loved, approved, and appreciated and people wish him well. The child needs much reassurance, but he can also bear a little open analysis of his own motives—his desire to keep his mother to himself, his jealousy of his father, his hatred of his stepmother and his aggressive feelings towards her, his keen sense of loss at his parents' death, and the reason for his sense of guilt in connection with the event.

With regard to an unsettled home, it is obviously not always wise or possible to patch up an unsatisfactory marriage when it is only too clear that the partners have fallen out of love. Sometimes a working arrangement can be made for the sake of the children, but it

is obvious that this is only a half-measure. When a definite break has to be made, it is necessary to find someone to take the place of the father or mother to the child. Often a relative—a kindly aunt or uncle, for instance—can do much to heal the hurt and make up in some measure to the child. It is important not to blacken the character of the erring parent too much, for the child will cherish many happy memories, and it is disturbing and conflicting for him to be constantly reminded that his father was cruel or criminal or that he drank too much. It is likely to cause disillusionment and distrust, and may well handicap and prejudice development in later life. It is usually best to tell the child the truth, simply and briefly, without much emotion, and trust to his good sense, his sympathy and tolerance, to accept differences, disagreement, and delinquency without too great a bitterness of feeling.

It is fortunate that many children will accept a good deal of "unconventional behaviour" without serious concern if they do not feel that they have lost their own place in their parents' affections. They recognise, for instance, that their mother has a man-friend in the nights that father works late; they know that father frequents the pub when mother thinks he is visiting a friend; they hear their parents arguing and quarrelling and even fighting, as well as love-making—but in many social circles this is just part of everyday life, the lights and shades that go to make up the many-coloured pattern of living. It is when a child feels himself that he can no longer be sure of a warm welcome at home, when caresses are cool or denied him altogether, that he feels in the way and

rather neglected. He begins to worry about himself and his relationship to his parents. He may seek comfort in unity with his brothers and sisters; he may seek solace outside the home, but, as we have seen, too often he turns to delinquent adventures to assuage his feeling of guilt, to reduce his aggression, or to relieve his sense of loss and anxiety, and thereby increases his estrangement and rejection.

When we seek to help a child we have to consider three aspects: (1) his material and psychological environment; (2) his endowment—physical, intellectual, and emotional; (3) his personality, that is to say, the way he has reacted to his environment, has dealt with strains and stresses, and the effects of these on his personality. We have then to decide how far we can modify the environment, and how far we can alter the child. We have to consider the parent's characteristics, the external factors in the situation, such as home conditions or separation from home, the parent's relationship to the child, and the child's personality. Clearly, both the investigation and treatment are expert jobs, and the social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists must not only have a specialised training but also a great deal of natural human sympathy and understanding. A great deal can be achieved with patience and skill, by play therapy and psychiatric treatment and psychiatric social work, but there are, of course, limitations imposed by human material and external conditions which cannot be altered with all the will in the world. Readjustment within the home is clearly the best way of dealing with the problem of the rejected child, but when that has failed, other methods must be tried.

READJUSTMENT WITHIN THE SCHOOL

In some cases it is possible to help a rejected child by changes within the school environment. It is possible to give a child a sense of security in the school and to make him feel wanted and understood if the teacher can give him enough individual attention.

The Adjustment Class in the Infants' Department is one method of dealing with this problem. Children who are immature, retarded mentally or emotionally, or who are proving difficult in an ordinary class, will do well in a small class where a great deal of play and free activity are allowed, and no attempt is made to press formal work on the child until he shows he is ready for it. Play, as we know, is a great safety-valve for emotion, and provides the child with an opportunity to dramatise conflicts and release pent-up feeling. Until he has done that he is not ready to learn in the ordinary school sense of the word. The child also gains a sense of "belongingness" and feels an important member of his small community. This will do a little to ease his pain at his rejection at home. At least the teacher has always time and interest to listen to him and to help him.

The Experimental School, organised as a day school, fulfils the same function for older children. It is usually only for intelligent children and children between 6 and 12 years of age. Classes are small and the child works at his own pace and at his own scheme of work. He stays all day and has good opportunity for free play and community life. He mixes with boys and girls of varying ages, in fact, a large family group; he joins in all community activities such as a school

play or sports or a party. His needs are well understood by the teachers, and his case history is discussed with the teachers by the staff of the Psychological Service. Close contact is also maintained with the home by the social worker. His sense of inferiority and school failure is quickly lost, for he finds that he can do the work expected of him because it is graded according to his mental age, and his particular difficulties are taken into account and remedial help given.

In the case of dull and retarded children the *Special Class* works in rather the same way. The work of the class has a strong practical bias, and the children work as much with their hands as with their heads. They learn cookery, housewifery, handicrafts, woodwork, gardening, etc., and relate the work in the three Rs to practical subjects so far as is possible. Their retardation is understood and taken into account. They can make progress here and prove their worth. They remain for a considerable time, sometimes three years in the same class, and in this way gain security and feel very much at home in this environment. When they have been misunderstood at home and constantly scolded for stupidity, this new approach may work wonders. The child gains in self-confidence and self-respect, and feels recognised and appreciated.

REMOVAL FROM HOME. ADJUSTMENT IN A NEW ENVIRONMENT

When it becomes clear that owing to the nature of the home or of the child it is impossible to readjust the child and that by remaining at

home the child is likely to suffer material, moral, or emotional harm, it is necessary to remove the child from home.

The Curtis Committee favour the plan of removing the child first to a *Reception Centre*, or a Receiving Home as it is sometimes called. This enables the case to be investigated fully and the child to be studied, so that the most suitable placement can be made to suit the child's needs. This period of waiting should not be unduly prolonged, for one aims to settle the child as soon as possible. Medical and psychological investigations can be undertaken, and knowledge about the child's health, intelligence, and personality obtained. This plan would be extremely helpful and would avoid temporary and unsuitable placements to some extent.

Adoption or fostering are considered the most satisfactory methods for caring for an unwanted child, because they provide circumstances which are nearest to a normal home life. The whole question of adoption and foster-homes is a large one and deserves a book to itself. The importance of explaining to an adopted child the truth about his origin is now more fully recognised, at least by adoption societies, and efforts are now being made to regularise the whole process of adoption. Reputable adoption societies do most excellent work in many instances. The advantage of adopting the child in babyhood is also emphasised by persons engaged in this work. Many excellent foster-homes approved by the local authorities have been providing "care and protection" for those children, who desperately need both, for many years and satisfactory adjustments are commonly reported. The

Curtis Committee insist that children living in foster-homes in general appear happier, livelier, and more natural than children living in Homes.

But there is the other side to the picture, and in Child Guidance work the failures in adoption cases and in foster-homes tend to loom rather large. Evacuation, for instance, revealed so many difficulties of finding suitable billets, and so many misfits and malcontents. Again, there are few foster-mothers who will accept graciously the child who soils or wets himself, who pilfers or destroys, or who is difficult in any particular way. As I have been at pains to show, so many children who feel rejected and who have suffered at the hands of different guardians during their early childhood are liable to show such symptoms. A period in a well-run hostel was found during the war to meet the needs of the so-called "unbilleteable" child satisfactorily, and when the symptoms cleared up after wise handling and psychiatric treatment if considered necessary, it was found possible to billet the child. But, of course, billeting is not for all time. It was a temporary expedient to meet a national emergency, and foster-mothers were eager to do their patriotic best for children who were bombed out. Fostering for good and all is another matter altogether and requires great care in selection. Success depends on the type of child, the type of home, and especially the type of foster-mother. It is, I think, worth while to examine the motives of foster-mothers rather more closely. If the motive is neurotic, the adoption or fostering of other people's children is not likely to be successful.

One very common motive arises out of the make-up

of the emotionally starved woman. The unmarried woman, the childless wife, the wife unhappy in her marriage, may turn to other people's children for the emotional satisfactions they crave. She is starved of love herself and hopes to obtain it from the small child who will be dependent on her for everything. She is usually sentimental, possessive, and over-protective. The child either becomes over-anxious and over-dependent, or else he rebels and becomes unco-operative and difficult. In this case he is usually rejected by the "mother" and his last case is worse than the first. In neither case are the foundations of satisfactory personality development laid. This type of maternal love is selfish and one-sided and is the wrong kind of motive from which to take up work with children or to foster a child.

Another rather common motive is an unsatisfied woman's desire for power. She seeks to dominate someone, and the helpless child provides her with just that opportunity to mould and shape someone to her pattern. How much better to get a dog or a cat or even a job ! The child will be dominated and repressed and have little chance to develop along his own lines. Rebellion or submission is the result : the first may produce a delinquent ; the second develop a neurotic adult.

Parents who adopt a child because they enjoy children and can have none of their own, parents who have only one child and feel it would be a good plan to find a companion for the child, may make a real success of the project. However, they generally insist on a child who has come from a good background and shows no abnormalities or difficulties of behaviour. There are

other warm-hearted people, acting from the very best of motives, who are prepared to open their homes to any little waif or stray, evacuee or refugee. We have all met these people during the war, but we have all noticed how exhausted they become, and often how grateful when "other arrangements" can be made for the child. The danger is that as soon as the child shows any difficulty of behaviour, or unpleasant habits, the person remembers that it is not her own child and she is not really ultimately responsible. Foster-parents tend often to look for immoral traits and dishonesty if they know that the parents' records were bad, and they blame the child's heredity. Their relations with the child usually undergo a subtle change, and they tend to "reject" him unconsciously. This, of course, only increases the anxiety and insecurity and deprivations of the child, and will aggravate the symptoms. It is always best to explain these dangers to adoptive parents and to matrons, so that with understanding they deal more sympathetically with the problems which are almost sure to arise at first.

The psychology of the foster-parent is therefore just as important to understand as that of the child. In practice one tries to fit the right child to the right home—by no means always an easy task.

The Curtis Committee, as I have said, tend to favour the foster-home, feeling that the need of the destitute and unwanted child for a normal home and the benefits of family life is so great that boarding out or adoption under proper safeguards provides the best means of satisfying these needs. Obviously this is so, but it is perhaps the counsel of perfection, for really good

homes which suit the needs of a particular child are not very easy to find. This is especially so when the child has passed babyhood and toddlerhood and has a legacy of mishandling and unfortunate treatment behind him. He usually has a warped view of life, and may think of grown-ups in terms of bullying fathers and nagging mothers. He endows his "mother substitute" with all these bad parental attributes and has his defences up, ready to meet any blows that may fall upon him. It takes time to learn that some grown-ups are different, and to appreciate what real mothering means. If the foster-mother is prepared for an experimental period when the child will try her out, test her to find if she is worthy, and seek to prove her adequacy to fulfil his needs, she will perhaps weather the temper tantrums, the tears, the stubbornness, disobedience, story-telling, or pilfering which may come her way at first. If tolerance turns to annoyance and sympathy to rejection, future relations are unlikely to be happy ones. Similarly, if she tries to compensate too much, trying to make up to the child for his unhappy early days, because she sees in the child a picture of herself and her own unhappy childhood, she strives too earnestly to be a good parent, and is distressed and hurt if the child does not at once respond with appreciation and warmth. But one must remember that the child is a very hurt child, and has little real trust in human nature. It takes time and much experience of kindness to recognise friendly overtures for their worth.

It is clear, therefore, that excessive emotional reactions, whether of devotion or antagonism, are likely to be harmful for the future happiness of the

parent-child relationship in the foster-home. It is important also to appreciate that the child will naturally show interest in his real mother, may ask numerous questions, and may weave fantasies of the fairy godmother calibre when his parentage is shrouded in mystery. I think the child should be given simple straightforward information about his parents and no attempt made to blacken their characters unduly. The natural tendency to be a little resentful of the child's allegiance to his parents, and to be jealous of his affections for other people must be recognised and guarded against. The child should be able to feel that it is safe to love his dead or absent parents, and possible also to feel affection for other people.

The Curtis Committee list the following conditions as being essential to successful boarding out :—

Congeniality between the child and both foster-parents and a real prospect of security and the development of mutual affection.

Willingness on the part of the foster-parent to further the interests and abilities of the child and to accept help in doing so.

Good wholesome conditions of living, however simple, not under the shadow of extreme poverty or precarious livelihood.

A location where the child can share in local life and know the neighbours.

If all these conditions are fulfilled there is hope indeed for the future happiness of the child and a good chance of the qualities of good citizenship developing.

One of the future developments arising out of the recommendations of the Curtis Committee will, I

think, be a demand for suitable foster-homes, and the compilation of a register of homes which have been found to be suitable and satisfactory for the care of the homeless child. If careful supervision is maintained, and expert guidance from a medical, psychological standpoint provided to those that need it, there is good hope of foster-home placement proving successful for a large number of "uprooted" children.

There are other methods for caring for the homeless or destitute child, and in the following pages I will outline certain alternatives.

THE RESIDENTIAL NURSERY

There is a considerable difference of opinion about the effects on a very young child of being brought up in a residential nursery. I think the case depends first on the type of child, secondly on the type of nursery, and thirdly on the nature of the circumstances.

Obviously there are dire cases of need, where the home life has been broken up, where the parents have been killed or have died, or where economic circumstances are so grossly unfavourable as to render some emergency measures essential to the happiness and well-being of the child. There is also a good case for a short stay in a residential nursery when the mother is confined or ill, or there is some great disturbance in the home which would be harmful to the child, and a short time away from home is very necessary.

The disadvantages from a psychological point of view are that separation from the mother at a very young age is damaging for emotional reasons, that the large numbers and the more impersonal care in the

nursery is not beneficial for emotional development, and the loss of normal family life denies the child the opportunity to experience real affection and security and learn his first lessons in social adjustment in the family *milieu*. His sense of bereavement is liable to be very great indeed.

These disadvantages can be offset to a considerable extent in a good nursery. First, the groups of children should be small and of mixed ages and sexes, so that they approximate to the family set-up. Second, as much contact as possible with the mother (especially if breast-feeding is necessary) should be arranged, and with the father whenever possible. The adults in charge should be properly trained for nursery work, *and should remain in charge of the same children all the time*, so that the child can experience stability of contact and consistency of handling.

Certain emotional difficulties, such as tempers, sullenness, babyish mannerisms, thumb-sucking, shyness, quarrelsomeness, should be expected and recognised as arising from anxiety and guilt feelings regarding the loss of the parents. Careful and gentle treatment is very necessary.

Probably Anna Freud's nurseries were as nearly perfect as possible, and fulfilled these conditions almost completely. I have seen others working under extremely difficult war-time conditions, where the children were obviously disturbed. They had no contact with their parents except for an occasional postcard and a very occasional visit. The amount of tearfulness, quarrelsomeness, and destructiveness was very great. The staff were overworked and insufficient. The equipment was inadequate. Certainly

the children were well fed and had good material conditions, but the disturbance to their emotional life and their acute sense of loss offset any material advantages. Evacuation of the under-fives without their mothers was almost certain to be a failure.

Similarly, long hours in day nurseries for children under 3 years can be very harmful, in my opinion. If the child is already suffering from "unwantedness," and his mother is only too eager to pass the responsibility on to someone else, long periods away from her will only increase his fears of being unloved and may cause quite severe anxiety symptoms and aggressive symptoms to develop. A very young child's sense of time is proverbially poor, and a few hours away from his mother may seem like "ever" to him.

There are nowadays some new and rather progressive methods for dealing with the difficult and unwanted child, which, though still in the experimental stage, are proving helpful in certain instances; with some of these I have been familiar.

THE HOSTEL

During evacuation it was found necessary to set up a number of children's hostels in Reception Areas for the so-called "unbilleteable" children. Some of these are still open, and while the evacuees are gradually being returned to their parents, or guardians, local authorities are considering using them for maladjusted children.

I have been closely in touch with several of these hostels, and have found them very helpful in certain cases. Where the child is suffering emotional strain

in his home environment, or when he is liable to become more maladjusted if he remains in the same environment, we are able to arrange short-term placements in a special hostel in the country. In one particular hostel the warden is a trained teacher with rather progressive views who proved extremely successful with difficult evacuees. His wife is a trained nurse and their own little girl lives in the hostel, and is on excellent terms with all the children. The children all attend the village school and mix with the villagers. They are often invited into other people's houses, and they usually participate in village cricket matches, either as players or as onlookers. There are large grounds, lovely trees to climb, lawns to roll on, waste patches where bonfires can be built, good playrooms, and an outside garage for woodwork and messy jobs.

The atmosphere is an extremely happy one. I have sometimes found the children busy melting old lead piping in biscuit tins and making it into guns, or in the midst of a craze for making bows and arrows, or for playing cricket, or discovered the entire hostel sunbathing in shorts on the lawn, or going off for a day's excursion into the hills near-by. There are only about twenty children, and their individual needs are well looked after. A full investigation of the home circumstances and of the child's background, personality, and intelligence are made by trained workers, and psychiatric treatment is arranged at the clinic if necessary. Close contact is maintained with the home by the social workers, and parents are encouraged to visit at week-ends or have the children home as often as possible. A period of six to twelve months is contemplated at the hostel, and after the symptoms

have cleared up and the home atmosphere improved, the plan is to reunite and, we hope, adjust the child to family life again.

The type of child sent to this hostel in future will be the enuretic, the young delinquent, and the nervous or difficult child, not the "educationally subnormal" or very dull children, nor very disturbed or unstable children. We aim to send rather young children from about 7 to 11 years of age, and both boys and girls. The psychological staff will have frequent case conferences with the hostel staff and give them a full history of the child's difficulty and discuss methods of handling him in the hostel. We have already found that incontinent children improve in this type of environment, and the naughty, troublesome child finds plenty of natural childish outlet for his pugnacity and energy.

It seems that such an environment can provide the right balance of freedom and discipline, and sufficient affection and security to aid the child in his readjustment. It also prevents him from being exposed to the strain of family disturbances, quarrels, and conflicts, and gives both parents and children time to come to terms with themselves. I think this kind of environmental manipulation and re-education may be the very best for this type of troubled child. It is not a Liberty Hall, and the child is expected to conform to the recognised standards of orderly citizenship. The tone is friendly, rather free and easy, and very homely. It has nothing in common with an institution, but the Education Authority is responsible for providing occupational material, books, toys, and the like. We have yet to prove that the child can retain his good

adjustment when he returns home, and careful after-care work will be necessary.

THE SCHOOL FOR MALADJUSTED CHILDREN

Another method of dealing with the maladjusted child is to send him to a school specially organised for dealing with difficult children, some of which are recognised by the Ministry of Education for the purpose. We have used a few of such schools and they have proved most helpful in certain cases. They will accept any child, however difficult, with open arms. Their standards tend to be rather unconventional and the child is given a large measure of freedom—I think in some cases more than he can bear. If he feels impelled to break the windows or smash the furniture, he is not restricted. One school I know of always appears rather untidy and unruly. It must seem something like an eternal picnic to a child. Lessons are voluntary, and if the child prefers to climb trees, build bonfires, or play at cowboys, no attempt is made to prevent him. In practice, the period of “running wild” never continues very long; he remains in an “uncivilised group” until he has become rather more adjusted and more at peace with the world. Then he “graduates,” as it were, to a more civilised group of children who are ready for a more organised life, a more definite timetable, and ready to learn and to study and able to co-operate more happily with adults.

Such a school is usually run on self-government lines. A Children’s Council is elected and passes judgment on all offenders. The worst punishment is “decitizenship,” when a child is stripped of the

privileges of citizenship and debarred from taking part in certain coveted community activities. Usually it is found that this sentence is passed wisely and accepted with all due seriousness. Minor punishments are fines, confiscation of property, and restriction of privileges. On the whole, a rough justice seems to be done, and the children at least feel that they are their own arbiters and govern their own actions.

I feel that children who have been "up against authority" and have proved their inability to adjust to any ordinary school may do well in this type of environment. They find that there is no need to rebel, there is no authority to hate, no vested powers to attack, and gradually they seem to learn to build up their own control and learn self-discipline.

Deprived, unwanted children also tend to flourish here. They have much individual care and affection. for the group is usually kept small and the number of the staff large. They find that however bad and hateful and tiresome they may be, they are still loved and accepted, at least by the adults. Children are also generally found to be remarkably tolerant to a difficult child. This reduces the pressure of the "super-ego" and the need to behave in an uncivilised way. Happy children are seldom seriously naughty.

I rather doubt if unintelligent children would do well in such an environment, for they cannot understand fully the methods of self-government and they cannot be treated in so rational a way. I think they need more definite leadership and more definite presentation of standards.

In my opinion very unstable children will not gain enough control or stability in such a school. They

will be left too much to the mercy of their own terrifying impulses, which they have proved they cannot handle without adult help. They need more specialised medical and psychiatric treatment, because they are psychologically ill.

In schools of this type for quite young children and for quite old children which I have visited, I have been impressed by the children's happiness and the staff's devotion. I have stayed at one of these schools, talked with the staff and the children, and though the atmosphere of happy-go-luckiness, messiness, untidiness, and haphazardness would prove distasteful to most adults, many children seem to thrive on it. Normal children would weary of this atmosphere and would seek to put things in order, and grow bored of so much unorganised freedom and unconventional living. I think, however, that the difficult, rather disturbed, or over-inhibited child gains a great deal. It is, of course, most important for the staff to set an example of good living, and conform to normal standards of cleanliness and order and behaviour. Too much licence in Liberty Hall can only be disturbing to a child who already feels overpowered by his own inner instinctive urges of lawlessness. I have noticed that after much experience of this type of work, the extremists tend to modify their views and insist on certain restrictions, certain rules about meal-times and bedtimes and "bounds," and after a time lesson periods usually become compulsory. I think that unless this is done the child may find the responsibility of making all his own decisions and providing all his own discipline too heavy a burden, and he needs the security which some external control or even wise

punishment gives to him. He does not feel so free to enjoy life, to experience care-free happiness, unless he can rely on a mature adult to bear some of his burdens and reinforce his ego controls to some extent.

We have yet to see whether a child who has spent many years of his life in such an environment, and usually long-term placements are necessary in these cases, can make good in a normal conventional environment. This is really the test of any such experiment. However, as it has been proved that he could not conform before, and as he has shown his ability to adapt to a children's community run on free lines, and gained poise, stability, and good experience of living, I think there is a fair chance of his further adjustment proving more successful.

INSTITUTIONAL PLACEMENT

I do not intend to go into the matter of institutional placement in any detail. The Curtis Committee has been investigating Children's Homes recently and its report has received much publicity. I have had some opportunity of discussing the problems of Homes run by local authorities, have seen a good number of Public Assistance Homes, Voluntary Homes, and the like, and have, of course, known a number of children referred for Child Guidance treatment from these Homes. The most common symptoms exhibited are pilfering, especially food and small sums of money, incontinence of faeces and urine, behaviour difficulties, and backwardness.

The general criticisms I should make of such Institutions are as follows :—

1. Shortage of staff.
2. Magnitude of Institution.
3. Insufficiency of members of staff trained in Child Psychology and Educational Methods.
4. Lack of understanding of children's needs, natures, and individual difficulties.
5. Lack of freedom and homeliness.
6. Over-emphasis on health and hygiene, to the detriment of childishness and happiness.
7. Constant changes of children from one Home to another.
8. Separation of brothers and sisters.

Admittedly, many persons connected with this work are well aware of these difficulties and of their own shortcomings, and realise that reforms are long overdue. Many individuals and societies are doing real philanthropic work in this field, but are handicapped by lack of funds, of knowledge, or of opportunities. In the next chapter I will outline the methods by which some of these defects can, in my opinion, be remedied.

SIZE OF GROUPS IN HOMES

It is, I think, true to say nowadays that there is a general tendency to reduce the number of children in each Home or "cottage." The following figures have been recently supplied to me and are worthy of note :—

Dr Barnardo's Homes.—"The policy of the Council is never to have a Home of more than forty-five children under one roof, and that preferably the children should be accommodated in cottages, taking twelve to fifteen, each with a central administrative block. In educational Homes for the backward,

our aim is to work to about thirty children, and for defective children, or children who need specialised moral training, we feel that the numbers should never be more than twelve.

"The ratio of staff to children varies according to the users of the Home. At toddlers' and babies' Homes the number works out at about one staff to two children. This includes, of course, cooks, domestic staff, and all inside workers. At normal Homes for boys and girls over the age of 5 years and up to the age of 16 years, the proportion of staff to children varies from six to eight children to one member of staff."

Obviously these figures are approximate ones, and no doubt with the difficulties due to war, and the shortage of trained staff, some Homes are larger than they should be, but it is gratifying to find that the responsible bodies realise the importance of small numbers and the disadvantages of mass institutional life. A small Home for especially maladjusted children is also provided by the Dr Barnardo's Homes Association, where expert psychological guidance is available.

Waifs' and Strays' Society; now Church of England Children's Society.—On an average not more than thirty children are catered for in each Home, except in cases of a few special Homes. At present an attempt is made to find good foster-homes for the children, and only retain the more difficult and inadapted children in the Homes.

The ratio of staff to children is quoted as follows :—

"Children aged 2 to 5 years : one staff to four children ; under 2 years old, staff additional to this.

"School-age children : at least one staff to ten children, with extra help for cleaning and also extra staff added where needed, having regard to the proportion of younger children."

L.C.C. Residential Nursery Schools (May 1946).—Twelve nurseries are maintained by the L.C.C. in the country for London children.

The numbers for which accommodation is provided are as follows :—

| | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|----------|
| (1) 28 | (4) 45 | (7) 80 | (10) 50 |
| (2) 46 | (5) 46 | (8) 45 | (11) 108 |
| (3) 36 | (6) 35 | (9) 45 | (12) 34 |

An average of 50.

The ratio of staff (including cooks and maintenance men) at these schools is approximately 1 : 2 for children under

5 years; 1 : 3 is the ratio of staff to children in other residential schools for the complete age range, *i.e.*, 2 to 16 years.

The Homes established under the *Poor Law Act* for chargeable children are, however, much larger, *e.g.*, 640, 540, 398, 628, 568, 568, 548, 560. Even when such Homes are organised in the "cottage" system, the unit is far too large, and it is difficult to imagine how a friendly, homely, non-institutional atmosphere can be obtained.

The Approved Schools established and maintained by the L.C.C. in or near London tend to be fairly small for girls, *e.g.*, 40 or 52,* but rather large for boys, *e.g.*, 140, 150, or 134. In practice this seems to work well, and it is more possible to organise good sport and craft activities and general community activities with a fair number of boys.

The Ministry of Health figures applicable to May 1946 show the following returns for children without parental care and in charge of *Public Assistance Authorities* in England and Wales :—

32,885 children were in establishments provided by the local authorities.

11,686 children were in grouped or scattered Homes.

5,209 were in other children's homes.

4,892 were boarded out.

4,598 were in voluntary homes.

The size of groups varies considerably. Cottages to accommodate ten to fourteen children is the approved policy, but some Homes still have cottages for twenty to thirty children, while the National Children's Homes plan for a unit of six to eight only.

On the whole, the old "barrack" type of school or Home is fast disappearing. Staffing is an extremely difficult problem. In general, each unit of twelve to fourteen children in a cottage has a foster-mother and her assistant and some domestic staff.

Complicating factors are the short stay of children accommodated only while the mother is ill or confined, and also the fact that Public Assistance Homes can never refuse a needy or destitute child.

N.B.—I am grateful to the authorities concerned for permission to quote these figures.

DELINQUENT CHILDREN

One method of dealing with the difficult child is for the parents to charge him as "beyond control" or for the police to prosecute on account of some delinquency. The child is then brought before the Juvenile Court. Often the case is "remanded" for several weeks while an investigation is made and medical, educational, and psychological reports obtained. Then on a second hearing a decision is made whether to place the child on probation, whether to admonish or dismiss the child, or whether to commit him to an Approved School. While the investigation is made, or while vacancies in a school are sought, the child is usually placed in a Remand Home.

The Remand Home.—In recent years the evils of the Remand Home have been much in evidence. It is clear that in some instances the word "Home" is a misnomer. Certainly there may be a healthy smell of soap and soda and polish, but it is unusual to find any toys lying about or a little natural mud! My experience of these Homes may be rather limited, but other people report similar conditions in other parts of the country. The children have plenty to eat, much opportunity for washing, but little education or constructive occupation, and very often an unattractive assortment of odd jobs and fatigues for the master and matron. Moreover, hardened sinners, first offenders, and children in need of care and protection are usually all mixed together, and no doubt many gain their first education in criminal practices from this association. Originally, of course, these homes were meant to be temporary, and a stay of longer than

twenty-eight days was never contemplated, but owing to the shortage of places in Approved Schools many children have had to wait months, and this has had a very bad effect on some of them. Recent publicity has brought the whole matter much before the public notice, and long overdue reforms will no doubt shortly be carried out. Children react differently to these surroundings.

I know of one boy of 9 years who was sent to me because he had thrown himself on the road in front of a tram. The magistrates thought the boy was abnormal. His story was pathetic—of a cruel father and a miserably unhappy home, and his suspected attempt at suicide was from his own account a deliberate attempt to enlist the sympathy of the Police and to get away from home. Obviously a Remand Home, where this boy had to be sent temporarily, was at least a shelter, and he appeared to be very happy there. It was much better than his own home.

In another case, one girl was shut up in a room by herself (because the rules forbade any mixing of the sexes). She was given a lovely fully dressed doll to play with. The warden was horrified to find that she had deliberately torn all the clothes to bits and smashed the doll to pulp. This act was probably of good therapeutic value to her, and expressed her feelings very nicely. Solitary confinement is unwise in most cases when the child's anxiety and guilt is already at fever-point.

A shorter stay, more occupation and education, and more kindness and homeliness would do something to help the young delinquent to begin his rehabilitation and re-education.

*Approved Schools*¹ vary up and down the country, and have come in for a good deal of criticism from

¹ An Approved School is a school approved by the Home Office for the purpose of re-educating and training the juvenile delinquent.

time to time. I will describe three schools I know fairly intimately, which all appear to be doing good work.

The first is a Junior Approved School for boys of school age. The school is especially designed for its purpose and has extensive grounds, a swimming bath, a farm, a sports field, recreation rooms, and a tuck-shop. The children, all attend normal lessons, except for a few "houseboys" who do jobs in the house in rota. A good deal of time is spent on athletics. A camp is organised in the summer. Every evening is spent in some activity such as a cinema show, a debate, a talk, organised games or woodwork, handicrafts or boxing. The tuck-shop is open certain hours, and each boy has pocket-money of his own to spend. The school is divided into houses, and the housemaster is responsible for the general welfare of the boys in his house. Parents are encouraged to visit, and home leaves and holidays are freely granted as the boy proves that he can be trusted.

The régime is a rigorous, lively, active one and seems to work wonders with tough little boys who need a great deal of outlet for high spirits and pugnacity. The relationship between staff and children is a free and friendly one. There is no sign of undue repression, only firm, sensible discipline. In many ways it compares favourably with a good boarding school.

There are, of course, some failures, and nervous or very disturbed children do not do well because they need more investigation and often psychological treatment, which is not usually compatible with the

training given in such a school. External control, guidance, and supervision cannot, in my view, help the seriously neurotic child. It can teach normal civilised standards of living to a child who has never known them. It can give a certain degree of security and experience of good community living, and good food, sleep, healthy living conditions, good education, and training will be of great benefit to the materially neglected child who has only known fickleness, uncertainty, and degradation. He does not, however, gain the parental affection that he has lost, and he does not make up for the loss of happy family life in any great measure.

The second school is for girls of school age, usually from 10 to 15 years. It is situated in the country, too, and is a lovely old house with charming gardens. The children attend the ordinary village school. There is a close link between the village and the school. They return hospitality and attend each other's parties and special entertainments. In this way the children do not feel so excluded from the normal community. The matron is a most understanding person who is ready to discuss any personal problem with a girl at any time. Many of the girls have been involved in sex delinquency of some kind, and the matron is careful to provide proper sex education and deal with sex problems in a frank and friendly way. All the girls do certain jobs in the house and learn a good deal of housework, cooking, and laundry before they leave. Evening occupations include handicrafts, acting, sewing, dancing, and on Saturday afternoons a play box is opened and the children can dress up, paint, knit, do puzzles, or play games as they wish. They

have a keen Guide company and go camping in the summer. They also help with the harvest round about. Games, such as hockey, are freely provided for. The atmosphere is a very friendly one, and the school is not so large as to prevent individual attention. The staff are prepared to deal with almost any kind of problem and are wise and considerate in their treatment.

The third school is one organised for *Senior Girls* which seems to me to have many good characteristics. For the first three months or so the girls do a course of housewifery, laundry, and cookery. Some continue in this for about a year, but if they show promise and prove trustworthy they are soon promoted from the main school to one of the hostels. Here they live with a group of about a dozen girls with a warden, and they go out to work in the city. They are given a great deal of freedom and are not dressed in uniform at all. In fact, they look very smart indeed, and are indistinguishable from, though often cleaner than, other girls from ordinary homes. Their evenings are perhaps rather too carefully organised. One night they have citizenship classes, one night handicrafts, one night ballet or ballroom dancing, one night letter-writing, and so on. The idea behind this policy is that if left to their own devices they are likely to get into mischief. There is also no provision for entertaining boys at the hostel, and although they meet boys at work they do not attend a mixed Youth Centre or club where they might have the chance to meet boys of their own age. This is unfortunate, in my opinion. Many of the girls have been sent to the Approved School because they have been involved in

some form of sex delinquency. Mere seclusion will not cure the difficulty. The programme of work, organised leisure, good food and sleep certainly works wonders for many of these girls, and the matron can report many successful cases and stories of girls who return to tell her of successful jobs or happy marriages, and their record is a good one.

I think it is true to say that a well-organised Approved School provides a child with a sense of security, of safety, and of standards. The background of discipline and control, the expert care and the guidance and training the young boy or girl receives help to build up self-respect and a new outlook for the future. It cannot, however, give the affection and personal care which a young child, especially from a "broken home," needs, and it seldom helps a really neurotic child to regain good mental health. It gives external support and helps in character-building, and if inner disturbances are not too great, all may go well.

CHAPTER V

SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS REGARDING THE CARE OF CHILDREN IN HOMES

IN this chapter I want to give some account of the way in which the "Home," where the homeless child is placed by the benevolent State authority, can supply some of the essential needs of children and make up to the rejected child for some of the handicaps he has suffered or is suffering.

Firstly, it is important that the child should build up a close personal tie with some adequate adult who will in some measure take the place of his mother. This means that the staff must not be constantly changing, and that the child is not removed from one Home to another as he grows up. He should be part of a small family group of children of mixed ages and sexes within a larger community. The adult in charge of this group should remain the same as long as possible, and should be able to show normal affection for, and individual interest in, the child. Clearly, the motherless child needs mothering, and unless the staff are prepared to do this, and have sympathy and understanding for children, they should not be employed in this work. The housemother should be neither a teacher nor a matron, though she should have some characteristics of both. What is more important is that she should be a well-balanced, kindly, sympathetic woman who can recognise the

worth of a child and appreciate the pain of loneliness, homesickness, and "unwantedness." Such a child does not want charity or sentiment. He needs understanding and appreciation.

Secondly, the atmosphere of the Home should be a natural, homely one ; probably the "Cottage Home" system is the best as long as the "cottages" are not too large. Probably eight to ten is the ideal number of children. The standard of hygiene and orderliness should not be above that of the normal home. The floors should not be so highly polished as to prohibit boyish games. The children need opportunity and space for free rough-and-tumble games ; sliding down the banisters or an occasional pillow-fight should not be regarded as heinous offences. The children will enjoy opportunities to help in the house in all sorts of different ways, and the older girls will enjoy helping with the younger ones ; but jobs should be a privilege, not a drudgery.

Thirdly, some contact with an older man who will take the place of the father should be possible. Probably a married couple is the best staff to have charge of a "cottage." Contact with the child's own family should be encouraged whenever possible by visits, letters, and parcels, and the child should be encouraged to talk about his family. This helps him to feel that he has a real family and really belongs to someone. If no contact is possible, it is often a good plan to arrange for interested people to "adopt" a particular child and invite him out occasionally and write to him now and then. This method has been used with considerable success in some Church of England Children's Society Homes.

Fourthly, the environment should provide special facilities to help this type of child. Some form of play therapy or occupational therapy is very necessary. "Play . . . performs a function of integration, for by 'playing through' his emotional attitudes towards himself the child puts himself in the place of the persons in his environment, tests the strength and quality of his emotions as well as his control over them, and builds up his personality in the process, emerging finally a more complete and better integrated individual."¹ The normal child, of course, needs good play opportunities, too, but the child from abnormal circumstances needs richer and longer opportunities, just because his conflicts are more intense and his development is less mature. Within the Home children must be allowed to play with water and sand and plasticine and wood, and make a mess and a noise sometimes. Some shed, den, or workshop must be provided for this purpose. It will provide a very valuable outlet. The older child gains release by different types of occupations or hobbies, *e.g.*, carpentry, weaving, gardening, cookery, chemistry, drawing, and the like, and this type of activity should be encouraged. No child should be expected to sit still or keep quiet for long periods at a time. This never happens in a normal family.

Fifthly, the proper training of the staff is all-important. Certainly, there are some sensible, motherly people who seem to know instinctively how to treat a child aright and combine real insight and intuition with motherly good sense. It is doubtful if a specialist training would make much difference to them. There

¹ L. Jackson and K. Todd, *Child Treatment and the Therapy of Play*.

are others who are prejudiced, righteous individuals who are unwilling to learn and to that extent are ineducable. First, then, individuals for this type of work should be carefully selected on the grounds of personality qualifications, and then they should be required to take a specialised training. Already short-term training courses are operating from time to time, but what is envisaged is a longer and more thorough training. This should include the following :—

- (a) Normal child psychology, coupled with observational and field work in Nurseries and Homes.
- (b) The special difficulties of children, which should include visits to Child Guidance Clinics and attendances at Case Conferences.
- (c) Play occupations and hobbies, when opportunities should be given for learning something about the running of play-centres and clubs, and certain skills such as puppet-making, handicrafts, simple woodwork, and the like.
- (d) Home nursing, hygiene, and mothercraft.
- (e) Household management, cookery, and administration.

Such a course would at least teach the person, rather like first aid, how little he or she knows, and when to call in the experts to help. (The course of training recommended by the Curtis Committee fulfils these requirements.)

It is also essential that salaries, holidays, free time and working conditions should be improved. This type of work is very exhausting, and it is important that the staff have sufficient rest periods and good

holidays. It is usually much the best course that the children attend the ordinary school outside the Home, so that they mix with ordinary children from normal homes, and the staff of the Home have opportunities of getting on with the housework and preparing for the children's homecoming.

Treatment of Special Difficulties.—In conclusion, I will attempt to give some general suggestions for the treatment of the various difficulties and anomalies of behaviour that are likely to arise.

As I have already stated, it is generally found that pilfering, incontinence, unruliness, and difficult behaviour are the most common problems to be met with in Institutions and among rejected children. Now these difficulties should be thought of as symptoms of mental unrest, the result of anxiety and insecurity and deprivation, the legacy of a "broken home." When a child runs a temperature he is put to bed and the doctor is summoned. He is treated with care and kindness. A child who wets or soils or pilfers needs just such expert investigation and treatment, and no matron should be too proud to seek help from the psychological expert. It has been proved that, though discipline is helpful to a child's development, severe punishments, scoldings, and the like nearly always aggravate the difficulty and handicap rather than help the child's development.

PILFERING.—So often this is a symptom of deprivation, and the only sure way of curing it is to see that the child is no longer deprived of love and care and personal attention, for which he craves so desperately. He needs possessions of his own, toys and a place to keep them, pocket-money and freedom to spend it,

clothes and pretty things of his own which he can value. He needs to feel that he belongs to someone and somewhere, and is a valued and appreciated member of a small group. He needs to be given small responsibilities and to feel that you can trust him. He needs also opportunity to play and express his feelings, which are often anti-social, in a free way, and help in learning to control and to re-direct them.

At the same time the child must recognise that the community will not tolerate dishonesty and misappropriation of other people's goods, and the censure of the other children and their distress at their loss should be sufficient to teach him that society demands a certain code and standard of behaviour. Gradually, as the child grows secure and feels happy in his new environment the pilfering should cease.

DESTRUCTIVENESS is another anti-social act which is frequently found among neglected children. Their attitude is perhaps summed up in the well-known rhyme, "I care for nobody, no, not I, and nobody cares for me." Therefore they feel antagonistic towards everyone and revengeful towards society. Their destructive behaviour is a sign of their own inner feeling of "badness" and unworthiness. Once again, it is essential to get at the root of the trouble. The child must come to realise that you do care about him and what he does, and that he is not just "nobody's nothin'." ¹ You must show your appreciation of his skills and prowess, his good behaviour, and his thoughtful actions. Praise and acceptance will work wonders. At the same time he must have some outlet for his destructive impulses. Woodwork, even chopping wood,

¹ Dorothy Burlingham and Anna Freud, *Young Children in Wartime in a Residential Nursery*, p. 76.

if he is old enough, digging, sand and water play, fighting games and boxing, will all be valuable to him. Gradually he will show that he is capable and can enjoy being creative and constructive, and this will bring him great reassurance and ease his inner fears about his own inadequacy to produce anything worth while. Real school achievements will also increase his confidence.

INCONTINENCE —With destructiveness often goes incontinence. This is often due to the same fear, that everything that he produces is "bad"; therefore he attacks the world with his bodily products and especially demonstrates his antagonism to his house-mother in this way. In an earlier chapter I have explained this in more detail. Very often, too, incontinence, especially of urine, is an anxiety symptom, an exaggeration of normal fear, and this is commonly found among very insecure children.

There are certain routine measures which will help a child. He can be roused twice nightly or, if old enough and it does not disturb the others too much, he can be given an alarm clock and shown how to set it himself. He should be supplied with a rubber sheet under his ordinary sheet, but not be given napkins as some mothers do. He may be encouraged to help wash his night-clothes or put the sheets in to soak if he seems anxious to do so. He can keep a record of dry nights, by stars or "V" signs, for instance. The matter should be treated as unemotionally as having a bad cold; his recovery greeted with the same delight and satisfaction. It should be recognised that to some extent he is not responsible, and that it is only as his anxiety decreases that his wetting will cease.

Soiling, unless related to mental deficiency and poor home training, is a more serious symptom of the same trouble, and usually psychiatric treatment is necessary.

Helping to clean up the mess is good for psychological reasons, because the child feels that he can "make good" for some of his "badness," and make social retribution.

Prophylactic methods are sand-and-water play, aggressive play, modelling, and painting. Let the child have good opportunities for messy play and smeary painting and he will help himself to work off some of his disturbed feelings.

The excessive insistence on cleanliness and the shame attached to any misdemeanour of this kind, of course, increases the child's weight of guilt tremendously. On the other hand, the child needs to recognise that the community has certain standards of cleanliness and order and beauty in order that he can reduce his own anarchy and chaos within.

MASTURBATION AND SEX PLAY.—This type of behaviour is, of course, found among children from normal home backgrounds. It occurs with greater frequency, however, with children from disturbed homes. Sometimes it is a way of seeking comfort. An unhappy child discovers this simple way of soothing himself, and once discovered, the pleasure induced encourages the child to continue. Meanwhile the guilt feelings and anxiety feelings increase a thousandfold, and usually adults only aggravate these. Sometimes a child has been over-stimulated by the scenes he has witnessed, and from sleeping in his parents' bedroom. He is puzzled and curious and

experiments with himself, and finds other children eager to explore with him. ' Often he is very naïve about the whole matter.

Mutual masturbation can be checked by suggesting that there are lots more interesting things to do, that the community as a whole does not approve of it, and that the child must wait until he is older to seek such forms of sexual pleasure. Masturbation itself should be ignored and dealt with indirectly by supplying the child with enough interesting things to do, and by ensuring that the child is happy and less anxious. No dire threats of castration, insanity and the like should be given. The most that one might say is that the habit wastes such a lot of good energy, which could be used for something more worth while. The attitude of the staff is all-important. If they understand the habit and recognise that it is the feelings, fantasies, and fears surrounding the practice which are the most serious, if they are prepared for its occurrence, they will be the more able to treat it dispassionately and wisely. A persistent masturbator may need psychological treatment and this should be freely sought.

SWEARING AND THE USE OF VULGAR LANGUAGE — Complaints are commonly made about this. It is a form of exhibitionism and a gesture of defiance towards authority. If it is ignored the sting is taken out of its tail, and the child ceases to get such a kick out of it. It is a form of *oral* aggression, just as soiling was a form of *anal* aggression. Of course, sex education is necessary in many cases, especially where it is clear that the child is confused and worried about the whole subject. If the matron does not feel equal to giving

a simple explanation, the doctor or psychologist should be asked to do so. Once a child understands the "facts of life" and his curiosity is satisfied, he will not find the same excitement in using rude words.

NIGHT TERRORS.—Fortunately, most people are sympathetic to children who suffer from night terrors, and follow their natural impulse to go and comfort the frightened child. There are a few, however, who believe in discipline as a god, and urge a stoic attitude. They leave the child to cry himself to sleep, and refuse to fuss or pet him. Obviously, this does no good and a great deal of harm. The child who wakes at night, pursued in his imagination by raging lions and tigers, needs all the comfort and reassurance an adult can give him. He needs to feel certain in his own mind that the grown-ups in his real world are ready to love and console him and wish him well, not ill. If the door is firmly shut and he is left in the dark to his own misery, his faith in human kindness is not reinforced, and his fears about his parents are not assuaged.

It is a simple matter to leave a night-light or a light in the passage, and to come and comfort and settle the child who cries in the night. Children in institutions usually sleep in dormitories, and company helps to reduce the child's fears. Small dormitories with two or three children, one of whom is older than the others and likes to do a little mothering, are best.

Here are a few practical suggestions for dealing with the little problems that are likely to occur fairly often in institutional life.

1. When a child is in a temper, do not punish him. Take him apart from the others, and when you can gain his attention talk quietly to him. Let him realise

that his temper does not get him anywhere, and is not approved by the community. On the other hand, it is well to realise that it is a kind of explosive reaction ; it works off a lot of steam and is a type of safety-valve.

2. When a child bites his nails or sucks his fingers, do not interfere. It is his own way of seeking comfort and shows that he is ill at ease and unhappy or bored. He needs more interesting things to do and more affection, but forceful methods of prevention or control only increase the need for the habit.

3. Expect a fair amount of quarrelling. It is one way of learning social adjustment, and usually it is best to leave children to settle their own affairs, as long as justice is done. Sometimes it is wise to suggest a new and interesting group activity, when tempers are short and ideas are shorter. Doing something together for some common purpose is an excellent way of helping the child to learn how to co-operate.

4. Over-attachments. "pashes," and the like are very common among emotionally starved children. They need to be treated with respect and understanding. The wise leadership of an older man or woman can help an adolescent boy or girl considerably, and the adult must take his responsibility towards the younger person seriously.

5. Moodiness and sullen or shy behaviour often occur. If it is persistent and seems to be the prevailing mood, expert help may be needed. On the whole it is best to respect the child's mood and leave him to work himself out of it. Sometimes a quiet occupation or a little personal interest may help such a child. It is important, however, to respect reticence, especially as the child gets older. Letters and secrets and private

conversations should never be pried into. You have to win the child's confidence; you cannot force it. If you try, you will only be deceived and put off with lies.

6. Lying occurs fairly commonly among this type of child. It is important to distinguish the childish confusion between fact and fancy, and the normal boastfulness and exaggeration of the quite young child, from the more serious lie to cover up wrongdoing. This last is usually due to fear, and if your relationship with the child is based on fear, and if he is afraid to confess misdeeds, you have yourself taught him to lie. You should set an example of truthfulness and also make it clear that you will forgive all peccadilloes, provided they are acknowledged. You should never accept tales from other children. Once confidence and trust is established, lying should not be necessary.

PUNISHMENTS.—Corporal punishment should *not* be used. It only encourages revengeful acts, does not reform, and produces feelings of hate and bitterness, which are harmful to your relationship with the child.

Probably restitution of damage, so far as it is possible, is the best method for dealing with damage inflicted—to make good what has been made bad. Sometimes it is helpful to send a bad-tempered child to bed for an hour, explaining that he is not really fit for the company of others, and the quiet rest will help to settle him down a little. Restriction of privileges, the loss of a treat such as a cinema trip, are useful methods. Deprivation of food, long moral lectures, ostracism are the worst possible ways of dealing with offences. In a well-run Home serious

troubles seldom occur, for the child learns to accept a simple code of behaviour and finds no difficulty in conforming to it.

In this book I have tried to help matrons, wardens, housemothers, and all those people who are responsible for the care of children removed from their own homes to understand something of the child's point of view, of his feelings, and his difficulties. No one who knows such children will belittle the task of those who have charge of them ; no one will minimise the importance of their work. I have tried throughout to stress the positive aspects of the work, describing Homes which appear to be specially successful in handling these problems of maladjustment, outlining different methods which have proved helpful, and making suggestions for ways by which certain problems of behaviour can be dealt with. The Curtis Committee has been at pains to expose the conditions which are unsatisfactory, the Homes which should be condemned, and the press has lost no time in giving publicity to the more glaring black spots. I have purposely refrained from detailing Dickensian conditions in institutions which are responsible for the bringing up of young children, although in the course of my work I have seen sufficient to disturb my peace of mind both as a psychologist and as an ordinary citizen who pays her rates and taxes.

In conclusion it is relevant to quote in full from the Curtis Committee's Report :

“ If the substitute home is to give the child what he gets from a good normal home it must supply :

1. Affection and personal interest ; understanding of his defects ; care for his future ; respect

- for his personality and regard for his self-esteem.
2. Stability; the feeling that he can expect to remain with those who will continue to care for him until he goes out into the world on his own feet.
 3. Opportunity of making the best of his ability and aptitudes, whatever they may be, as such opportunity is made available to the child in the normal home.
 4. A share in the common life of a small group of people in a homely environment."

In short—affection, understanding, security, outlets and good community life; surely a worthy ideal to which to work. It is indeed encouraging to know that many people already recognise these standards, and that a certain number of "substitute homes" have reached them.

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS IN CONNECTION WITH THE CARE OF CHILDREN IN SUBSTITUTE HOMES

1. See that every child has some special toys of his own and a special place where to keep them.
2. Give the child some opportunity for privacy and a chance to confide in his foster-mother if he so wishes.
3. Give him pocket-money and an opportunity to spend it.
4. Let him have some choice in regard to the clothes he wears.
5. Let him have a place where he can make a mess and a noise sometimes.
6. Try to arrange that he can visit his friends or relations now and then if they live near.
7. Keep some pets if at all possible and let the child help in looking after them.

8. Let the child have an opportunity to do little jobs in the house which he enjoys.
9. Let him have contacts with the normal life of the town or village in which he lives, by visits to shops and markets, cinemas, and parks, etc.
10. Let him feel the same as ordinary children from normal homes as far as possible, by wearing ordinary clothes, by knowing something about his own relatives, for instance.
11. Encourage his parents or relatives to visit him as often as convenient, unless they are liable to do the child harm.
12. See that brothers and sisters are together in the same house as far as possible, and try to see that the small group corresponds to a normal family group in that it shall consist of children of mixed ages and both sexes.
13. Avoid changes of staff as much as possible.
14. Avoid changes of homes for the child. Let him grow up in the same "family group" as far as possible, unless he fails altogether to adapt himself.

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GLOSSARY

PAGE

8. psychic—relating to the mind
8. super-ego—a term in Freudian psychology which designates the controlling influence, or conscience, in the mind
9. psycho-analytic studies—studies by means of a psycho-therapeutic system which aims to reveal the subject's unconscious mind or repressed wishes, etc., to his consciousness
18. Child Guidance Clinics—clinics where psychological treatment is given to difficult children
21. guilt feeling—a technical psychological term indicating a sense of shame which is largely repressed.
22. incontinence—inability to control passing of urine or faeces.
25. Remand Home—a place of shelter to which a child is committed from a Juvenile Court while his case is being investigated and future placement decided upon
64. psychiatry—the art of healing the mind.
66. psychiatric social worker—a person who has had training in social work and psychiatric work.
95. play therapy—a method of psychological treatment by play
95. occupational therapy—a method of psychological treatment by activity and occupation
100. prophylactic—preventative.
100. masturbation—art of stimulating one's own sex organs.
101. exhibitionism—tendency to show off.
101. oral—relating to the mouth.
101. anal—relating to the anus, or function of the bowel

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